

Central Business District Concept Plan



Adopted November 6, 2001



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Central Business District

Concept Plan

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I INTRODUCTION

This Concept Plan for Fremont's Central Business District (CBD) defines, focuses and illustrates the vision for the development of Fremont's CBD over the next 20 years. For almost thirty years, one of the goals of the City of Fremont General Plan has been to create a "well-defined, visually distinctive and vibrant commercial, governmental, and cultural center" in Fremont's Central Business District. Although the CBD has the largest concentration of office, government and retail uses in Fremont, the CBD today lacks the character of a "downtown" with a focus of pedestrian-oriented uses and a vitality of commerce and activity.

In the past, growth in the regional economy - and especially growth in Silicon Valley - has fueled growth in the need for office space and housing in Fremont. The City hopes to capitalize on future economic growth to help foster the creation of the pedestrian-oriented "downtown" described in its General Plan.

The CBD Concept Plan is largely the product of 18 months of effort by the Downtown Plan Advisory Committee (DPAC), a sixteen member citizens' committee. The Plan is a 20-year strategy aimed at the creation of a more intensive, vibrant city center.

The Plan is a conceptual document beginning with a vision and goals, and then setting forth some of the strategies that must be adopted to achieve its goals. It will be implemented through a variety of tools including changes to the zoning ordinance, design and construction of public and private projects

and other means set forth in the implementation chapter.

The Plan presents drawings and illustrations that are intended to illustrate conceptual ideas and notions about how the CBD might develop under the Concept Plan. The drawings are illustrative only, and do not reflect specific design requirements for either the City or developers.

In order to realize the vision described in this Concept Plan, the City must play a significant role as the implementing body of the Plan. Many of the concepts described, such as new streets, open spaces and a development incentives package, will result in significant changes in the CBD and CBD development policies. These concepts will require the City to take the lead in pursuing funding sources and allocating resources to bring about the substantial improvements and changes to Fremont's Central Business District.

A. Planning Area

Fremont is located on the southeast side of the San Francisco Bay in Alameda County, as shown in Figure 1-1. Fremont is the fourth largest city in the Bay Area, with a population of over 206,000 residents (in 2001) in a 92-square mile area. The city is nestled

against the hills that are part of the mountain range running the length of the East Bay.

Fremont is located in the northeast end of the expanding Silicon Valley. The explosive successes of the high-tech and bio-tech industries continue to fuel economic expansion in the region, and Fremont has recently come to be an integral part of the Silicon Valley economy.

The study area for the CBD Concept Plan is Fremont's Central Business District (CBD), as defined by the existing General Plan. The CBD is centrally located between the five original towns that joined to become the City of Fremont: Niles,

Centerville, Irvington, Mission San Jose and Warm Springs, as shown in Figure 1-2. The boundaries of the CBD are Mowry Avenue to the north, the BART station to the east, Stevenson Boulevard and Sundale Drive to the south, and Argonaut Way to the west, as shown in Figure 1-3. The CBD covers 430 acres, of which 350 acres are in development parcels and 80 acres are public streets.

The CBD today is home to a range of uses that include office, medical, retail and banking services, with a small amount of housing in isolated areas. Buildings range in size and scale, from one to six stories, and are typically surrounded by parking lots.

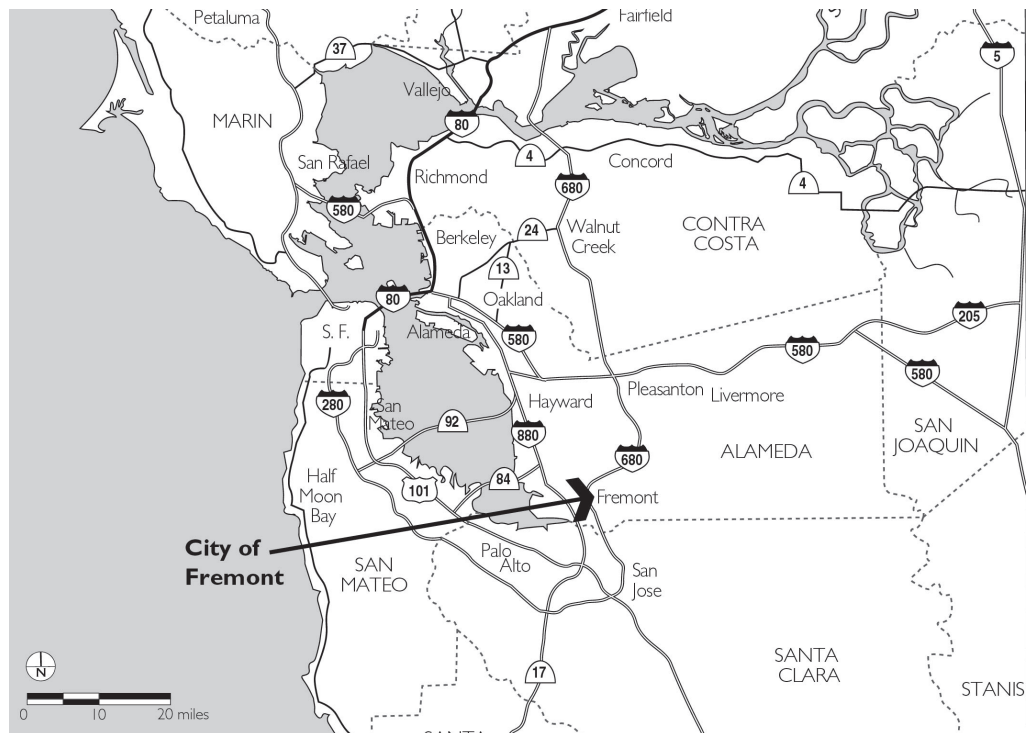


Figure 1-1. Fremont's Location in the Bay Area

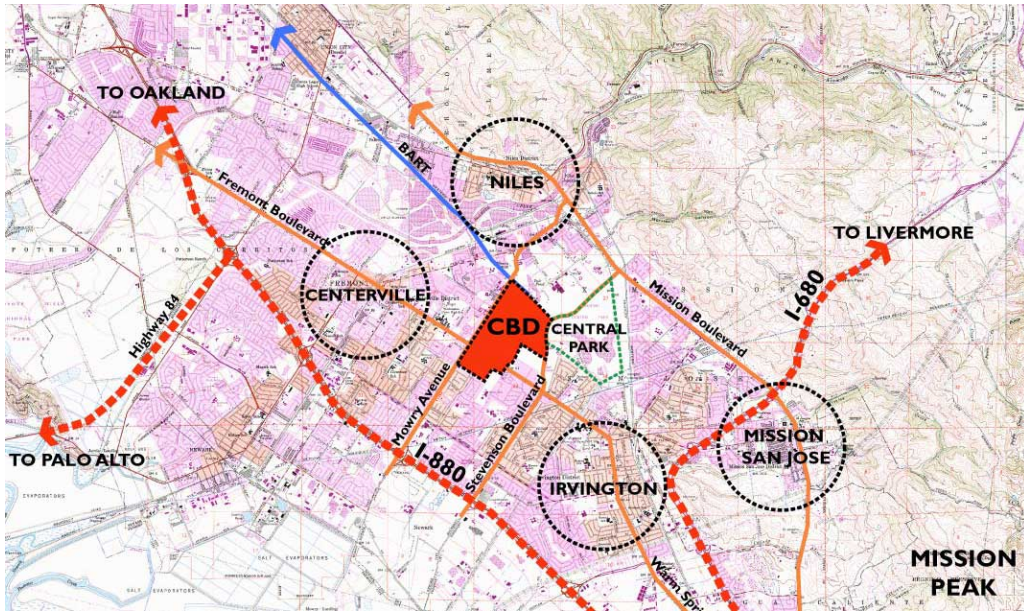


Figure 1-2. Project Vicinity

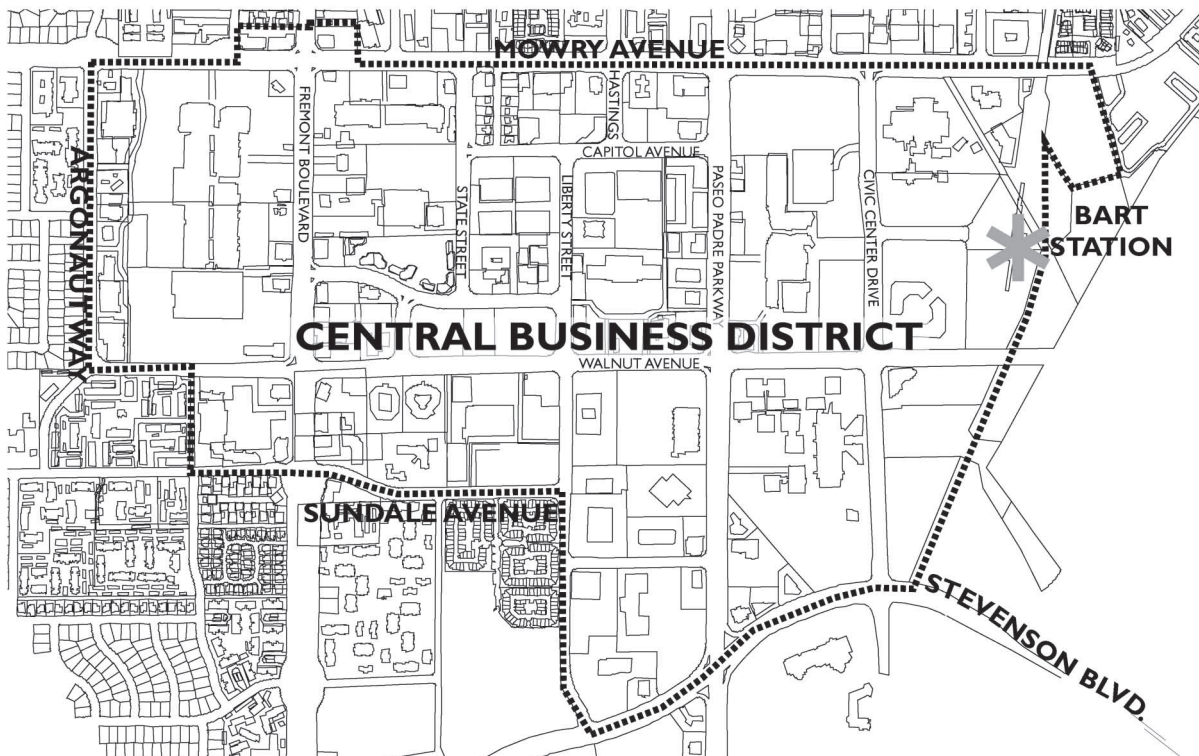


Figure 1-3. CBD Project Area

Streets are wide, with no on-street parking, and the block sizes are large.

Major destinations in the CBD include the BART station, Washington Hospital, Kaiser Hospital, City offices and the County Court building, the Fremont Hub and Fremont Plaza shopping centers. The CBD is currently estimated to include 1.8 million square feet of retail space, 2 million square feet of office space and 1 million square feet of medical space.

B. Planning Time Frame

The 20-year planning time frame for the CBD Concept Plan provides an opportunity to consider the possibility of significant change in the character of the CBD. Within 20 years, the wide range of likely property transactions, shifts in physical development conditions and building trends will create an environment in which a great deal of change is likely to occur. The consultant team estimates that approximately 155 acres within the CBD (or 44% of the privately-owned land) will be subject to redevelopment within the 20-year planning time frame. This land includes 37 acres of vacant land and about 118 acres of land that is currently developed with one-story buildings.

C. Planning Process

The planning process began with the appointment of a sixteen-member Downtown Plan Advisory

Committee (DPAC) by the City Manager. The DPAC included representatives of interested organizations such as the League of Women Voters, property owners, business owners and members of the public with no specific interests. The DPAC spent many hours establishing a vision, discussing alternatives and finally making its consensus recommendations. The planning process also included an extensive community outreach program, which included a series of community workshops.

The DPAC's work resulted in a Draft Concept Plan (December 2000) which was presented to the Council in January, 2001. The Draft Plan was then presented to various community groups for comment. The Council provided initial direction to staff in July 2001, leading to a revised Draft Plan (September 2001) that was the subject of a public hearing before the Planning Commission in September 2001. The Council approved the final plan on November 6, 2001.

D. Concept Plan Overview

The Fremont CBD Concept Plan sets forth goals and a vision to guide the development of the CBD. The Plan presents ideas for uses, development standards, open space and streetscape, circulation and parking standards, financing and marketing strategies, and incentives and regulatory recommendations that would support the development of the vision and goals. These components are described in the following chapters:

- ◆ **Chapter 1, Introduction:** Introduction to the Concept Plan background, planning area and planning process.
- ◆ **Chapter 2, Existing Conditions:** Summary of background research regarding existing urban design, market and transportation conditions in the CBD.
- ◆ **Chapter 3, Plan Vision and Goals:** Overview of the vision and goals of the Concept Plan.
- ◆ **Chapter 4, CBD Concept:** Descriptions of subdistricts, street network, civic uses and open space and gateways, and views.
- ◆ **Chapter 5, Street Network and Parking:** Concepts for street improvements and vehicular circulation, bicycle-pedestrian circulation, and parking are described.
- ◆ **Chapter 6, Regulatory Framework:** Review of the current CBD zoning and an outline of incentives and a new regulatory framework.
- ◆ **Chapter 7, Building Design Guidelines:** Design guidelines for new development in the CBD.
- ◆ **Chapter 8, Plan Implementation:** Overview of code changes, capital improvements, marketing strategies and funding sources.
- ◆ **Appendix A, Background Reports:** A summary list of the background reports prepared during the Concept Plan development
- ◆ **Appendix B, Comments on Housing in the Focus Area:** A summary of DPAC members' comments for and against housing in the Focus Area.

I: INTRODUCTION

2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

This chapter describes the development conditions that existed in the Fremont CBD at the time of the creation of this Concept Plan. It includes a summary of the discussions of the existing development patterns, market and transportation conditions in the CBD. For detailed analyses, please see the background reports described in Appendix A.

A. Urban Design and Development

This section includes a description of existing general plan policies and zoning requirements. It also describes existing uses, building form and typology, streetscapes and views.

1. *Existing General Plan Policies*

The General Plan calls for a “vibrant, well-defined” center that “unites all parts of the City.” According to the General Plan, the CBD is intended to be “a high intensity, pedestrian-oriented office, medical, civic, entertainment and business nucleus.” The General Plan includes a set of policies which call for greater pedestrian-orientation in building. The existing General Plan policies related to development in the CBD are included below:

- ◆ **Transit- and Pedestrian-Orientation.** “The site plan and building development in the CBD shall be oriented toward transit and pedestrians. To maintain an active pedestrian environment, buildings oriented towards streets, sidewalks or public plazas shall be strongly encouraged.” (Land Use policy LU 2.7 of the General Plan).
- ◆ **Development Continuity.** “Building orientation, setbacks, parking locations and building design shall be evaluated for how each element encourages continuity between developments.” (Land Use policy LU 2.7 of the General Plan).
- ◆ **Pedestrian Walkways.** “CBD developments should provide safe, convenient and continuous pedestrian walkways linking building entrances to street sidewalks and linking building entrances to adjacent building entrances, activity centers and transit.” (Land Use policy LU 2.8 of the General Plan).

“Esplanades shall be provided where designated in the General Plan.”

“Developments shall provide for inter-block and intra-block pedestrian circulation.”
- ◆ **Public Open Spaces and Plazas.** “Public open spaces and plazas should be encouraged throughout the CBD. Such areas should be visible and accessible from public walkways and be appropriately landscaped with opportunities offered for sitting.” (Land Use policy LU 2.9 of the General Plan).
- ◆ **Public Art.** “Encourage publicly visible art works in new private developments and in public spaces.” (Land Use policy LU 2.10 of the General Plan).

2. *Zoning*

The zoning designations and policies are consistent with General Plan requirements.

As stated in the Zoning Ordinance, the purpose of the CBD is “to provide for a concentration of retail, service and office uses reflecting the needs of the entire city and the subregion. Development within the district shall be in accordance with the principles contained within the General Plan.” The zoning ordinance includes four levels of regulatory review of uses: uses which are not allowed (prohibited); permitted uses which are not subject to discretionary review except for minimum conformance with the site and design requirements of the zoning ordinance; conditional uses which are reviewed by the Planning Commission; and uses which are approved by the staff level Zoning Administrator.

The Zoning Ordinance also sets forth building and site design standards, although for the Central Business District it does not specify building heights,

minimum lot area, minimum lot width, minimum yard width adjacent to streets, minimum interior side yard width, or minimum rear yard depth. The ordinance specifies a maximum 0.8 floor area ratio (FAR) within a 1/2-mile distance of the BART station property lines, and a 0.5 FAR in all other areas.

The Zoning Ordinance lists uses focused on regional or sub-regional market office and retail users, service uses, medical, entertainment, eating and drinking establishments, and mixed-use development as allowed uses. Highest intensity office use is encouraged within a 1/2-mile of the BART station and neighborhood serving retail uses (such as supermarkets) are discouraged within the same area.

Additionally, auto repair and auto sales, high volume retail and wholesale uses are considered to be generally inappropriate in the CBD. Wholly residential projects are currently not permitted within the CBD.

3. Existing Development

The CBD is currently developed with predominantly retail, office and medical uses, with a total of about 3.7 million square feet of buildings, as shown in Table 2-1 and in Figure 2-1.

The area surrounding the CBD is generally residential with densities ranging between 18 and 35 dwelling units to the acre.

TABLE 2-1. **EXISTING SQUARE FOOTAGE BY USE IN THE CBD (2000)**

Building Use	Building Square Footage
Office	1,975,936
Hospital	997,842
Office & Hospital	2,973,778
Auto-Related	34,069
Retail	1,466,498
Restaurant	33,680
Banks	132,169
Vacant Retail	95,461
Retail	1,761,877
Residential	168,133
Public	243,974
Total Square Footage	5,147,762
Total Retail/Office Square Footage (excluding hospital)	3,737,813

2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

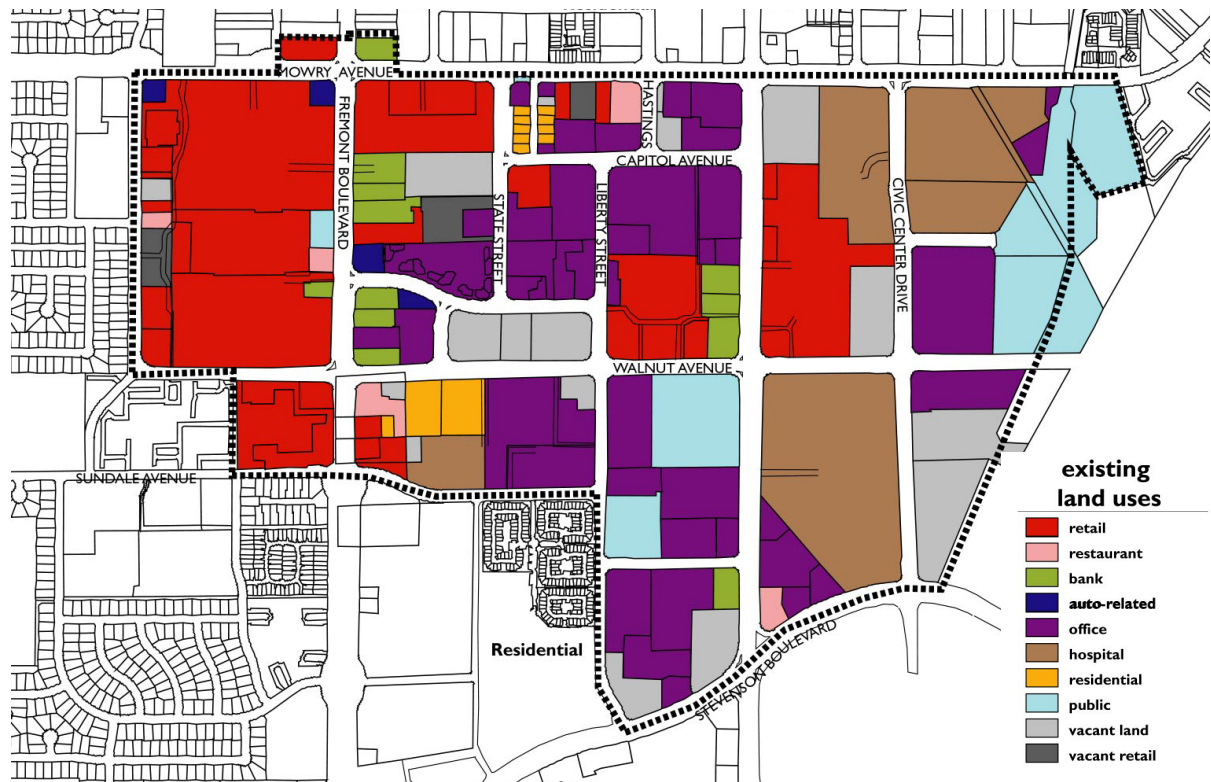


Figure 2-1. Existing Land-Use (1999)

4. Views

The views of the surrounding open hillsides are a major asset of the CBD. To the east are views of the Fremont hills and to the south are views of Mission Peak. The hills are predominantly visible from the street corridors and between buildings.

5. Connections

There are a number of existing walkway connections within the CBD.

- ◆ **Existing Easements.** There is a system of easements over private property which provide both vehicular and pedestrian access through private development sites. Some of these easements have been developed to provide continuous connections while others have not.
- ◆ **Existing Walkways.** Several private developments include pedestrian walkways that are intended to provide connections through their

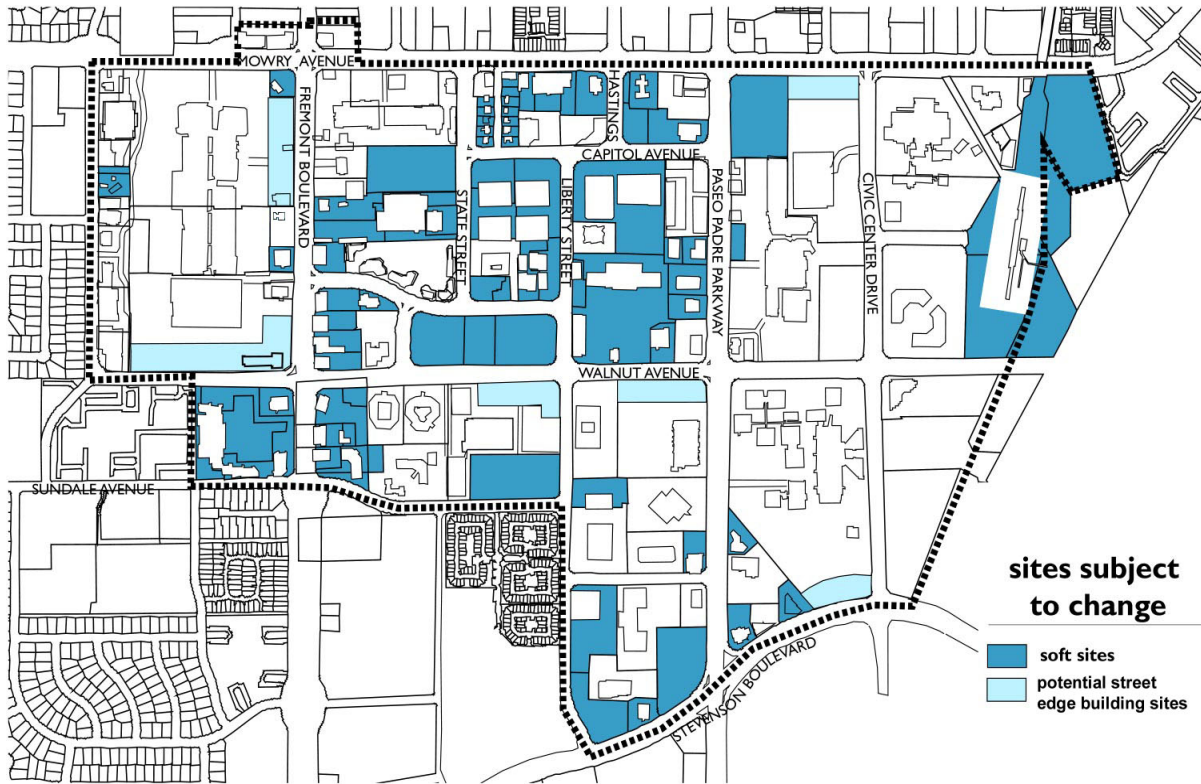


Figure 2-2. Sites Subject to Change

project sites. For example, there is a walkway which provides a connection from Civic Center Drive to the BART station through an office complex at Civic Center Drive and Walnut Avenue. Other examples include the walkways at Fremont Plaza, Gateway Plaza, the Hub and the Town Faire complex. Several of these are identified in the existing General Plan.

6. Sites Subject to Change

“Soft sites” are sites that are subject to change within the 20 year life of the Plan. The consultant team identified classification criteria that indicated whether a site was considered to be “soft,” as shown in Figure 2-2. These criteria included vacant parcels, vacant and partially vacant buildings, parcels with very low lot coverage, some one-story buildings, or buildings

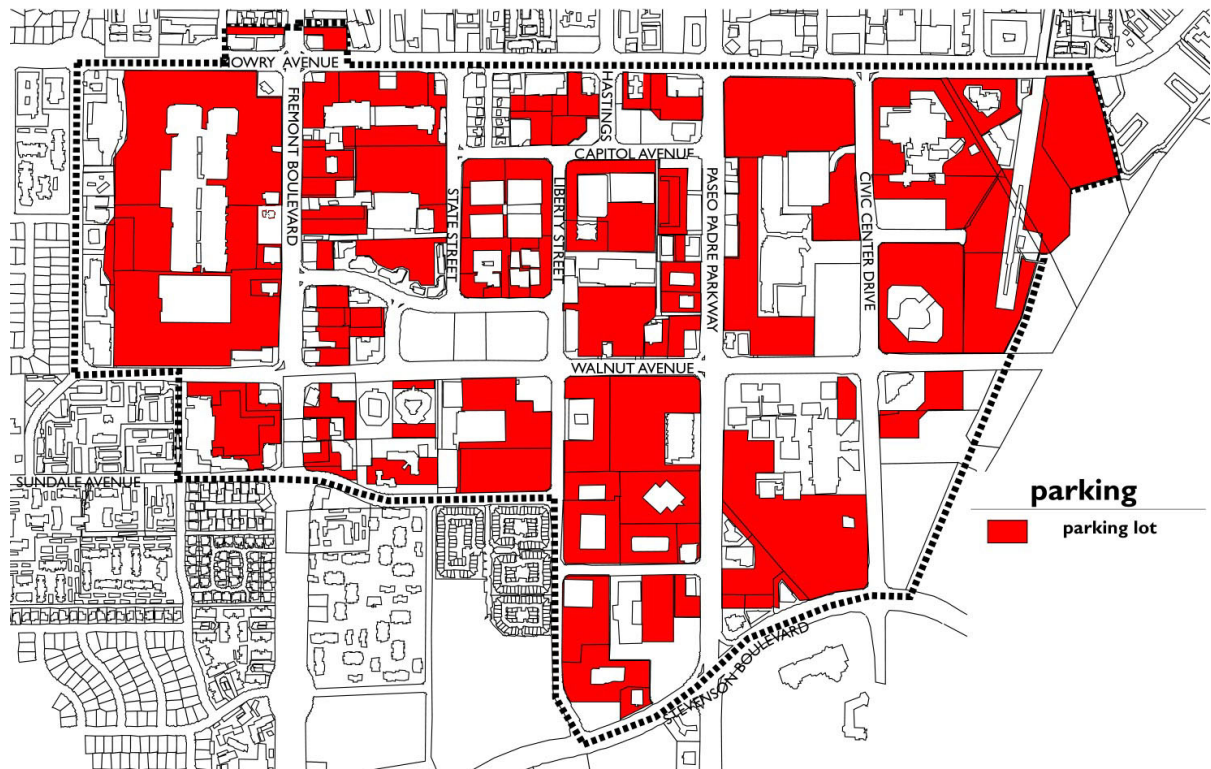


Figure 2-3. Parking Lots

in need of repair. These “soft sites” do not include vital, one-story retail buildings. Figure 2-2 also shows parking lots where new buildings could be constructed to fill in along street edges. The soft sites shown in Figure 2-2 comprise approximately 155 acres of developable land area. This acreage does not include surface parking lots that would be maintained to serve existing buildings that are not on soft sites.

7. Parking Lots

Over 50% of the development parcels in the CBD are dedicated to surface parking lots. These lots are typically located adjacent to sidewalks, and are illustrated in Figure 2-3. The discontinuous building edges and the vast surface parking lots work in concert to create streetscapes lacking a sense of enclosure and building continuity. The resulting character of the physical environment is auto-oriented, and lacks pedestrian amenities.

B. Market Conditions

A market overview examining existing market conditions and the future market outlook for six land uses, including retail, entertainment, office, residential, hotel, and medical office, was completed by Bay Area Economics as background for the Concept Plan. The market overview is not an in-depth feasibility study for any particular use or site. Instead, it provides a general understanding of the trends and conditions affecting the study area and broadly evaluates the opportunities and constraints for future development. The report is summarized here, and is available in its entirety in a separate volume entitled Market Overview for the Fremont Central Business District dated April 1999.

Research for the report included collection and analysis of published and unpublished data such as U.S. Census data, taxable retail sales data, and recent home sales data. In addition, extensive primary research was conducted, including key informant interviews and discussions with current property owners and project sponsors. The market overview is summarized below.

1. *Competitive Advantages of the CBD*

Fremont's CBD has several competitive advantages when compared to other geographic areas in the region. These competitive advantages represent strengths of the CBD in attracting tenants and users:

- ◆ The City is experiencing substantial growth.

- ◆ Fremont has now become a part of the expanding Silicon Valley.
- ◆ The CBD offers more inexpensive rents than other areas in the region.
- ◆ Fremont's CBD offers access to BART.

2. *Competitive Disadvantages of the CBD*

Fremont's CBD is subject to the following competitive disadvantages, which are attributes that make it harder for the CBD to attract users and tenants when compared to other geographic areas of the region:

- ◆ The CBD lacks direct freeway access.
- ◆ The CBD contains a great deal of underutilized land and outdated retail uses.
- ◆ There is a lack of a definable "downtown" image in the CBD.

3. *Demographic Trends*

The following demographic trends characterize Fremont as a whole, and are relevant to the CBD's market position:

- ◆ Fremont grew 1.3 % per year in the period from 1990 to 1998, as compared to 0.9 % per year for Alameda and Santa Clara Counties.
- ◆ Fremont has a high median income of \$71,900, as compared to the Alameda and Santa Clara County average median income of \$59,300.

- ◆ Fremont has a high home ownership rate of almost 65%.
- ◆ Fremont has slightly more children and fewer seniors as a percent of population than Alameda and Santa Clara Counties.
- ◆ More than 9,000 new households and 33,000 new jobs are expected in Fremont by 2020.

All of these facts point to the strength of the local economy and the potential for economic growth in the CBD.

4. Retail Market

Fremont's relatively wealthy population creates the potential for strong retail sales. Although inflation-adjusted retail sales in the State declined slightly during the period from 1990 to 1997 (which is the last year for which data is available), Fremont's per capita sales increased slightly. This suggests that Fremont has the potential for higher retail sales than other parts of the State.

The larger existing retail shopping centers in the CBD are relatively healthy. The Fremont Hub has recently undergone renovation that includes new facades, pedestrian amenities and new retail tenants. Other CBD shopping centers are experiencing low vacancies. However, some retail areas, particularly smaller retail centers and stand alone retail buildings, are struggling.

As a retail area, the CBD competes with many major regional shopping areas, including McCarthy Ranch, the Great Mall, Newpark Mall, and Union Landing. Given the surrounding competition, there is not a strong potential for significant amounts of new retail uses in the CBD. According to Bay Area Economics' calculations, an additional 200,000 to 300,000 square feet of retail may be supportable in the CBD, with an emphasis on specialty retail and restaurant opportunities to create higher levels of amenity in the CBD.

5. Entertainment Market

Entertainment uses are a key component of many recent urban development schemes, and could be part of new development in the CBD. Many cities across the U.S. are experiencing a resurgence in urban entertainment centers, which provide evening and weekend opportunities to attend movies, view performing arts, experience family recreation, and dine. This trend has attracted strong developer and investor interest, creating a wide range of entertainment products in downtown settings.

While the CBD already has a number of entertainment uses, Fremont's demographics would support more entertainment uses such as restaurants, high-tech arcades, indoor entertainment, and possibly additional movie theaters.

6. Office Market

The CBD offers a relatively inexpensive location for offices, particularly for users who do not wish to pay higher rents in Silicon Valley. The CBD has

been experiencing relatively low vacancies, with rents that are moderate for the region (\$1.85 - \$2.15 per square foot in 1999, as compared to \$4.00 and more in the Silicon Valley). The office market in the CBD is relatively strong, as witnessed by several recent project applications and construction projects. The outlook for additional office development is moderate to strong for products similar to those already being built in the CBD, with a possibility for growth in the long term in mid-rise or even high-rise products. Large office developments in the CBD would have to compete with new office developments elsewhere in Fremont and the region.

7. Medical Office Market

Medical offices are an important subcategory of the office market in the CBD. The CBD supports two existing hospitals—Washington Hospital and the Kaiser Medical Center (which is used for outpatient services only)—as well as a branch of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation and several other medical facilities. Growth at Washington Hospital is expected to fill the hospital's former Capwell building, which is currently only one-third full, and Kaiser is planning to open a hospital in Fall, 2002. The demand for medical office uses in the CBD will grow with population increases and as a function of expanding services at Washington Hospital and Kaiser.

8. Housing Market

Fremont's housing market, and that of the Bay Area as a whole, is very strong, with high housing prices, strong demand and a low supply relative to demand. Residential rents in 1998 averaged \$1.29 per square foot, which represented an increase of 7.5 % from

1997 to 1998. By way of comparison, Mountain View's residential rents average \$1.58 per square foot.

Because of this strong market, the Fremont Core Area, which includes the CBD and surrounding areas, added 1,300 units since the mid-1990s. Relatively little of this housing growth occurred in the CBD itself, since the City currently disallows residential development in the CBD in most cases.

The market for residential uses in Fremont is strong, and there should be continued demand for a broad range of housing products. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimates that the City should provide approximately 5,000 new housing units between 2001 and 2006 to provide for its share of the region's housing needs. According to ABAG's estimate, almost two-thirds of that housing should be for those of very low, low and moderate incomes.

9. Hotel Market

There are currently no hotels in the CBD. The larger region has a number of hotels, with many either recently constructed or under construction. As of Spring, 1999, over 2,000 rooms were planned for the area, including eleven hotels planned in Fremont with 1,098 rooms and six hotels planned in Milpitas with 765 rooms.

Even before construction of these new hotels, some hotels in the area were experiencing below-ideal occupancy rates in the range of 60 to 70 percent, although other hotels were near 100 percent occupancy. The hotel industry usually considers profitable occupancy rates to be 70 percent or higher.

Occupancy rates are likely to go down as the new supply of hotel rooms is available.

Major hotel development in the CBD will likely lag behind development of other uses discussed in this report, due to several factors. First, the surrounding area contains several hotels with lower than ideal occupancy rates, creating a competitive environment. Second, there are a substantial number of new hotel rooms planned for Fremont and the surrounding area. Third, most of the expanding national operators catering to the business market prefer the visibility and accessibility found along I-880, making the CBD less competitive due its locational disadvantages.

C. Transportation Conditions

This section summarizes the findings of a report prepared by Fehr & Peers Associates regarding existing transportation facilities and conditions in the CBD. The entire report has been published separately as the Downtown Concept Plan Existing Conditions Report dated April 1, 1999.

- ◆ **Existing Arterials.** Fremont's CBD is served by a number of high-capacity arterial streets that have enough capacity to accommodate currently planned growth, as evidenced by the acceptable year 2010 intersection service levels projected by the City for buildout of the General Plan. Paseo Padre Parkway, Fremont Boulevard, Stevenson Boulevard and Mowry Avenue are all important arterials that are needed to carry

existing and projected city-wide traffic.

- ◆ **Capacity on Minor Streets.** Some of the minor streets in the CBD have more capacity than is needed to accommodate existing and future traffic volumes. These streets include Capitol Avenue, State Street, Hastings Street, Mount Vernon Avenue, Beacon Avenue and California Street. Due to their excess capacity, these streets are candidates for modification through the Concept Plan.
- ◆ **Transit Services.** The CBD has a relatively dense network of regional and city-wide bus routes, and is served by BART. However, most transit service goes through the CBD, rather than serving the CBD as a primary destination. There is no local bus or shuttle service specifically oriented to transporting people within the CBD.
- ◆ **Bicycle Network.** An off-street bike path serves the Fremont BART station and portions of Civic Center Drive, connecting bike lanes on Walnut Avenue to the bike route on Stevenson Boulevard. According to the City's "Bicycle Commuter Map", Walnut Avenue and Argonaut Way contain bike lanes within the CBD. Field observations, however, indicate that bike lanes on Walnut Avenue terminate at Fremont Boulevard and that there are no bike lanes on Argonaut Way. Mowry Avenue and Stevenson Boulevard do not have consistent signing indicating their designation as bicycle routes.

- ◆ **Block Sizes.** The CBD is divided into very large street blocks, which are generally too large to accommodate a functional and attractive pedestrian network. The distances between cross streets are too long to be easily traveled by pedestrians. These large blocks provide the opportunity for creation of new streets and block patterns.

- “ **Parking Requirements.** Fremont’s parking requirements are generally consistent with those for other Bay Area downtowns such as Walnut Creek, Mountain View and Palo Alto. However, these cities allow more flexibility in provision of downtown parking through parking assessment districts and in-lieu parking fees. To date, the City of Fremont has chosen not to exercise similar options.

2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

3 PLAN VISION AND GOALS

This chapter outlines the vision for Fremont's CBD and describes the goals of this Concept Plan.

A. The Vision for the CBD

Fremont's CBD will become known for its vitality: a place where people wish to come to work, to shop, for entertainment, for services, for culture, and simply to walk around. Visitors, employees and residents alike will experience a CBD that features a range of

uses and design elements that celebrate Fremont's history, diversity and presence in the Bay Area community. It will be a place people recognize as the heart of Fremont.

Within the CBD will be a smaller Focus Area that serves as a hub of activity. This center will contain a mix of uses including retail, offices, entertainment, open space, and cultural arts organized around a main street. This main street, to be constructed on Capitol Avenue and an extension of it to Fremont Bou-



Figure 3-1. Perspective Illustration Looking South on Capitol Avenue from State Street

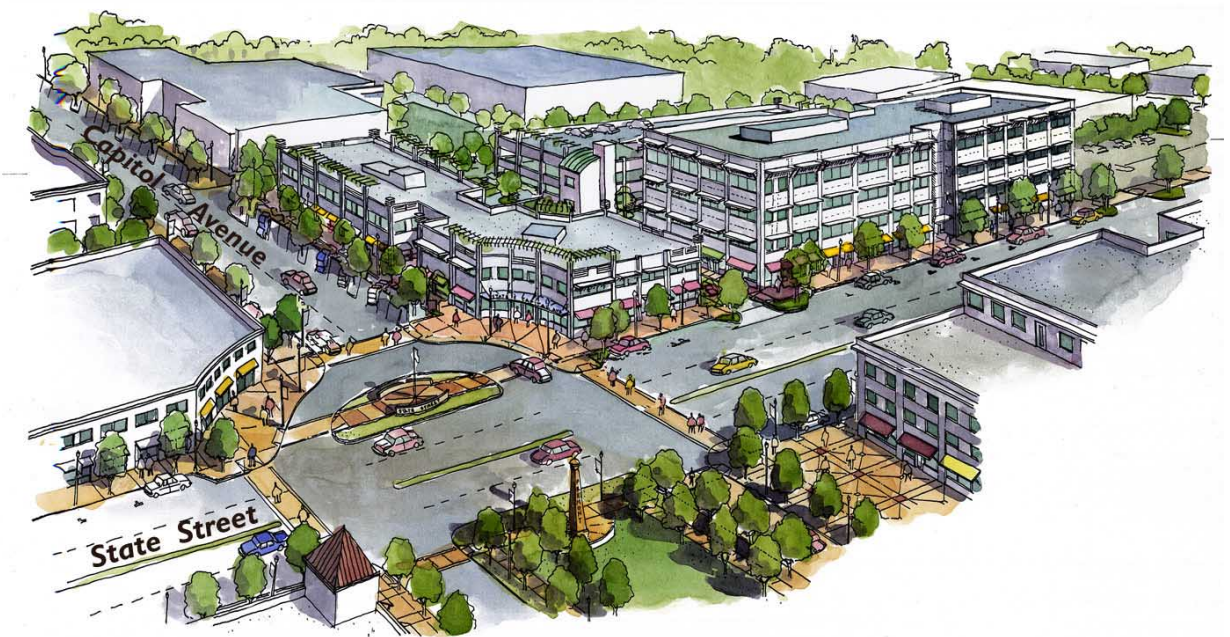


Figure 3-2. Conceptual Perspective Illustration of Potential Development on Capitol Avenue at State Street

levard, will become the major retail center for the CBD. The street will be an attractive place to shop, stroll and dine, and will become the true center to the focus area. Helping to anchor this area will be the new Fremont City Hall and City Hall Plaza and a new Cultural Arts Center. This Focus Area will be walkable, containing improved streetscape and pedestrian environments. People visiting the Focus Area will be able to park their cars in conveniently located parking facilities and walk to their destina-

tions. The city center will be well-connected to the remainder of the CBD through a series of pedestrian, vehicular, bicycle and transit connections linking important destinations such as BART, Washington Hospital and the Fremont Hub. Transit connections will also provide convenient access to the nearby historic commercial districts of Niles, Centerville and Irvington.

B. Concept Plan Goals

The goals of the Concept Plan were developed through a series of visioning and brainstorming workshops and were defined by consensus at community meetings. These goals form the basis for the development of the Concept Plan.

Concept Plan Goal 1: Create a recognizable and memorable Downtown which people can take pride in, and to which people want to go.

A Focus Area would be created within the CBD that would be developed with buildings fronting walkable city blocks, with parking structures located conveniently mid-block. Improved streetscapes, pedestrian-oriented walkways, and civic elements would enhance the Focus Area.

Special civic and cultural elements are proposed to enhance the CBD's memorability, such as a new city hall, a cultural arts center, and a grand entry into the Focus Area on an extension of Capitol Avenue.

The creation of a new main street, Capitol Avenue, will play a key role in the creation of a memorable Downtown area. The new main street will feature many pedestrian amenities and will support retail shops conveniently accessible from parking areas and pedestrian paths. This new vibrant street will be-

come the heart of the CBD and will draw people to visit Fremont's Downtown.

Additionally, view corridors to the surrounding hill-sides should be preserved. One of the hallmarks of Fremont, as described in the General Plan, is its "open feeling." While the downtown envisioned here will have taller buildings and be a more intense environment, it is important to maintain visual connections to the open hills which are part of what defines Fremont.

Concept Plan Goal 2: Create a Downtown comprised of a mix of land uses.

A mix of uses that will create a vibrant city center should be developed in the CBD. The CBD should be developed as a series of subdistricts, including the Focus Area described above, each of which would be encouraged to develop with a slightly different set of development standards and emphasis of uses. In the Focus Area, the greatest degree of mixed land uses would occur, including retail, commercial, civic and cultural uses. Other subdistricts would focus on medical uses, office uses or residential mixed uses. The goal is not to preclude any area from having a mix of commercial uses, but to encourage differentiation between subdistricts over time.

Concept Plan Goal 3: Improve streetscape design in the CBD.

New streetscape improvements should occur throughout the CBD. Pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular experiences would be enriched through the narrowing of some wider streets where possible, the addition of planted medians and street trees, and improvements to private roadways. These improvements would be coordinated into an overall network of streets and open spaces to create an improved visual and functional environment.

Concept Plan Goal 4: Improve amenities for pedestrians, particularly in the Downtown focus area.

Active pedestrian use at all hours of the day creates a lively and safe community environment. Amenities proposed in the Concept Plan include new open spaces, pedestrian-oriented streetscape designs and mid-block passages. These amenities would be particularly concentrated in the Focus Area and would be added over time as other areas within the CBD are “redeveloped.” Buildings fronting the sidewalk would enliven the sidewalks with display windows, planters, awnings and cafe seating. Sidewalks landscaped with tree plantings would help buffer pedestrians from vehicular circulation. These design approaches are included in Chapters 4 and 5 of this Concept Plan.

Concept Plan Goal 5: Improve connections to the BART station.

The Fremont BART station is an asset for local residents, regional commuters and Fremont visitors. Under the Concept Plan, BART Way would be extended over time as private development occurs, in order to provide a cross-town connection to the Focus Area and Hub shopping area from the BART station. If a shuttle service is introduced, it would help improve connections to the BART station. These improvements are described in Chapter 5 of the Concept Plan.

Concept Plan Goal 6: Encourage a network of strategically-placed public and private parking facilities.

Parking structures are proposed to be easily accessible in the central Focus Area. Access to parking structures is proposed to minimize disruption of retail street frontages. On-street parking is recommended on streets with retail uses. The parking structures and on-street parking would be linked together through a pedestrian and vehicular circulation system to create a parking network. The parking network is illustrated in Chapter 5.

Concept Plan Goal 7: Support economic vitality, particularly for small businesses.

Implementation strategies and design guidelines intended to support economic vitality by creating opportunities for small businesses are provided in this Plan. Main street retail frontages and small-scale retail spaces are given preference, as described in Chapters 6 and 7.

Concept Plan Goal 8: Reflect history, as appropriate, and Fremont's cultural diversity in the design and development of the Downtown.

A Cultural Arts Center should be established within the CBD Focus Area. Sites for this purpose are identified in Chapter 4. This Cultural Arts Center would be an ideal opportunity to document and celebrate Fremont's history and cultural diversity. In addition, civic art and public open spaces can also be designed to celebrate Fremont's rich history and multi-cultural diversity.

Concept Plan Goal 9: Encourage the use of energy efficiency and green construction methods in building technology in the CBD.

Development within the CBD should take advantage of modern technologies to reduce energy and resource consumption. A set of design guidelines for energy efficient buildings and green construction standards should be developed for the City as a whole.

C. Implementation

As stated in the introduction to the Plan, the City must play a key role in implementing the vision and goals of the Concept Plan. The City will be responsible for providing policy direction to implement the Plan and to structure the development incentives package described in the Plan. The City must also pursue funding opportunities, allocate existing resources to the CBD, and conduct a number of additional studies and programs to bring this vision for the CBD into being.

3: PLAN VISION AND GOALS

4 CBD CONCEPT

This chapter describes and illustrates the concepts and physical design components that reinforce the goals and vision proposed in this Concept Plan. This chapter includes an overview of the CBD concept, descriptions of individual subdistricts proposed for the CBD, a discussion of civic uses, provision of the open spaces and view corridor preservation in the CBD. It concludes with a summation of development potential in the CBD.

The Concept Diagram (Figure 4-1) illustrates three key components that would guide new development in the CBD, which include subdistricts, a “focus area” and an enhanced street network:

- ◆ **Subdistricts.** The General Plan states that the plan for the CBD should identify “a limited core area for very high intensity development, and other subareas as necessary or appropriate.” Central business districts the size of Fremont’s are often divided into “subareas,” each with a slightly different focus for the type and character of development which occurs there. Seven subdistricts are proposed to distinguish areas within the CBD that would have special building design and use characteristics. While a variety of uses would be permitted in each subdistrict, the plan would emphasize certain uses and characteristics in each subdistrict. These use

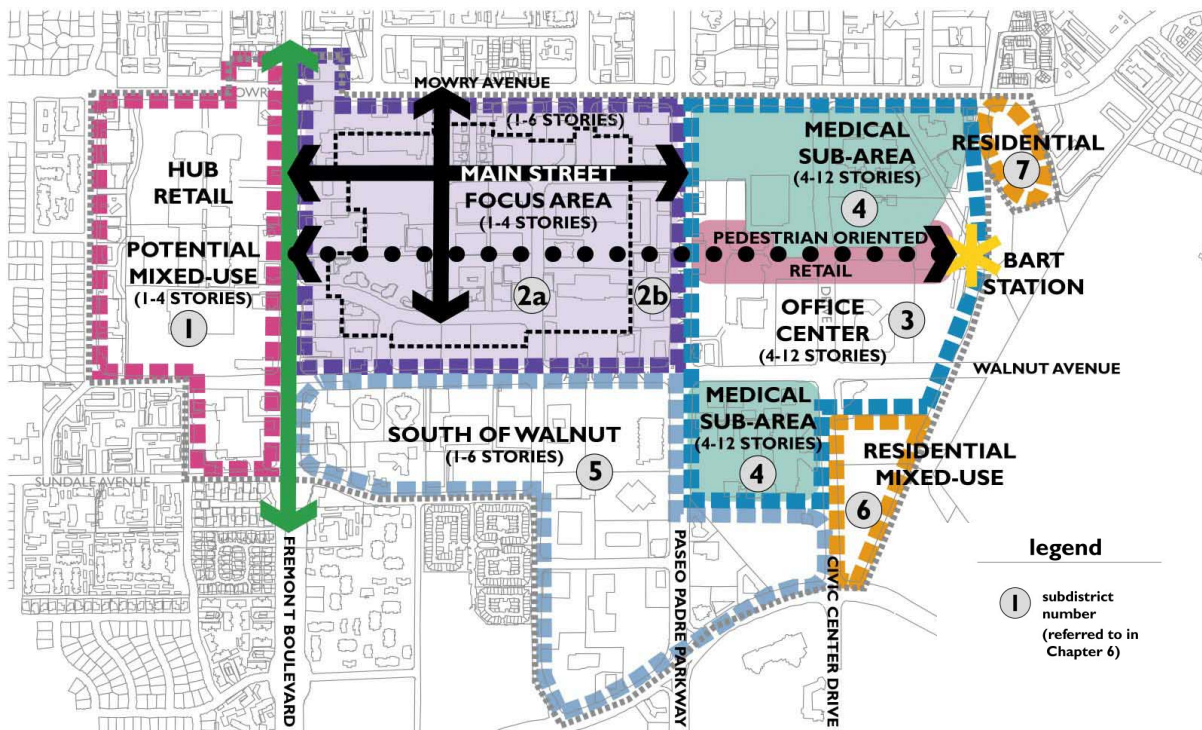


Figure 4-1. CBD Concept Diagram

and building design characteristics are described conceptually in this chapter, and the specific incentives and regulations proposed to achieve them are described in Chapter 6. The seven subdistricts are as follows:

1. The Fremont Hub Area
2. Focus Area
3. Office Center
4. Medical Area
5. South of Walnut Area
6. Civic Center Mixed-Use Residential Site
7. BART Residential Site

◆ **Focus Area.** A smaller focus area with a downtown-like character should be established in the CBD. This focus area will be a walkable area that contains a concentration of pedestrian-oriented buildings housing retail, office, cultural and civic uses. In particular, Capitol Avenue will become “main street” in the CBD, and will become an important pedestrian and retailing destination in the City, CBD and Focus Area. Residential uses could be permitted in a limited way in the Focus Area as part of mixed-use developments.

◆ **Enhanced Street Network.** As shown on the Concept Diagram, several important streets and circulation routes would form the spine of the street network in the CBD. The streetscape de-

sign proposals for these corridors are described in Chapter 5. The following streets would be fundamental components of the pedestrian-oriented street network:

- Capitol Avenue
- State Street
- BART Way

Other streets would serve the traffic circulation needs of the area, including Fremont Boulevard, Paseo Padre Parkway, Walnut Avenue, Mowry Avenue and Stevenson Boulevard. Although these streets must maintain their current auto-carrying capacity, improvements may be made to the streetscape to make some of them more pedestrian-friendly. Proposals for their design are also discussed in Chapter 5, as part of the overall streetscape and circulation network for the CBD.

A. CBD Subdistricts

There are a total of seven different subdistricts proposed within the CBD. The overall development intentions for each of the seven subdistricts are described below.

1. *The Fremont Hub Area*

The Fremont Hub Area includes the Fremont Hub and The Crossroads shopping centers at the west edge of the CBD, as shown in Figure 4-2. The 26-acre area contains approximately 955,000 square feet of commercial space and is currently the most significant retail area in the CBD. The Hub has under-

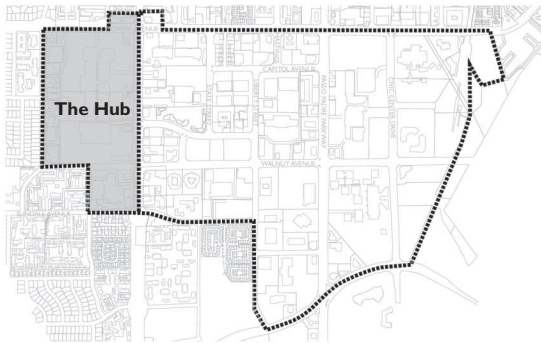


Figure 4-2. Fremont Hub Area Location

gone renovations and several new tenants have locating there. The Wards store at the south end of the HUB has closed and options for new development on this end of the HUB are under discussion, including the development of a new Target store.

Older shopping centers similar in design to the HUB have undergone substantial redevelopment in other parts of the country. These centers have been redesigned to have a wider mix of uses, and to be even more pedestrian-oriented, with streetscape and plaza elements that would create an “urban-village”. Figure 4-3 shows one concept whereby the existing Hub buildings are reconstructed to break up the interior mall design, and incorporate new streets “carved out” of the existing buildings. These new streets could incorporate pedestrian open spaces, plazas and fountains. New buildings could be located at the periphery of the Hub center, which would help to define the street edge of Fremont Boulevard and Mowry Avenue in particular. Buildings could be up to 4 stories in height. This illustrative plan would result in the maintenance of the existing amount of retail

space (about 1 million square feet) and the potential to add housing units.

A variety of other plans could allow the Hub to diversify and remain a healthy retail environment while encouraging the creation of an active and vital center. The City should allow for flexibility in planning for the future of the Hub, including allowing for the possibility that housing may be part of the mix of uses that retain and enhance the viability of the Hub.

When the Hub redevelops, Williams Park could be expanded to provide an open space connection into the Hub’s core shopping area. This should occur in conjunction with an enhancement and restoration of the Carriage House, as described in Section D of this chapter.

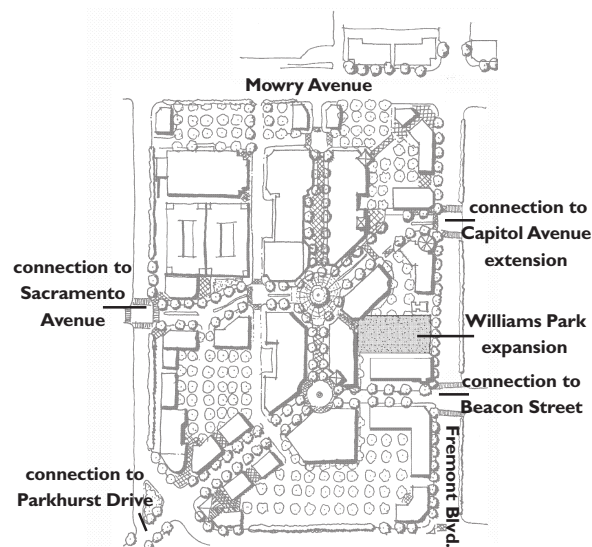


Figure 4-3. Possible redevelopment of the Hub

Local circulation is important to support the “urban village” concept for this subdistrict, and to provide connections to other subdistricts in the CBD. Any new streets in the Hub Area should be designed to provide enhanced connections to the rest of the CBD. In conjunction with the extension of Capitol Avenue to Fremont Boulevard, a new street through the Hub should be configured to provide a direct connection from the Focus Area to the signal on Argonaut Way adjacent to the residential neighborhood, west of the CBD.

2. Focus Area

The Focus Area, bounded by Mowry Avenue, Fremont Boulevard, Walnut Avenue and Paseo Padre Parkway as shown in Figure 4-4, is proposed to be the center of pedestrian-oriented activity in the CBD.

In this subdistrict, a range of activities and uses would be concentrated with an emphasis on retail, office, entertainment, civic and cultural uses.

Pedestrian-oriented design would be required in the Focus Area. Retail and similar activities would be concentrated on the ground floors of key streets in the Focus Area: Capitol Avenue and State Street. With some exceptions, new development in the Focus Area would predominantly include vertical mixes of use in one to four story buildings as illustrated in Figure 4-5. Buildings around the outer edge of the Focus Area along the major streets (Mowry Avenue, Paseo Padre Parkway, Fremont Boulevard and Walnut Avenue) could rise to as much as six stories.

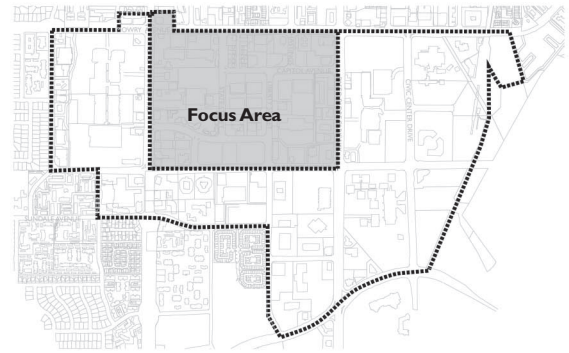


Figure 4-4. Focus Area Location

Capitol Avenue is intended to be the main street of the Focus Area and the major retail destination of the CBD. Capitol Avenue would thus become a significant pedestrian area in the CBD. Buildings along Capitol Avenue would be stepped back above two stories to preserve view corridors and to create a traditional main street ambiance. Retail buildings could be one story, but buildings with other uses would have a minimum height of two stories in order to encourage a more active environment. Capitol Avenue would be extended to Fremont Boulevard, thereby creating a direct connection to the Hub



Figure 4-5. Vertical Mixed Use Building Section



Figure 4-6A. Existing Conditions on Capitol Avenue

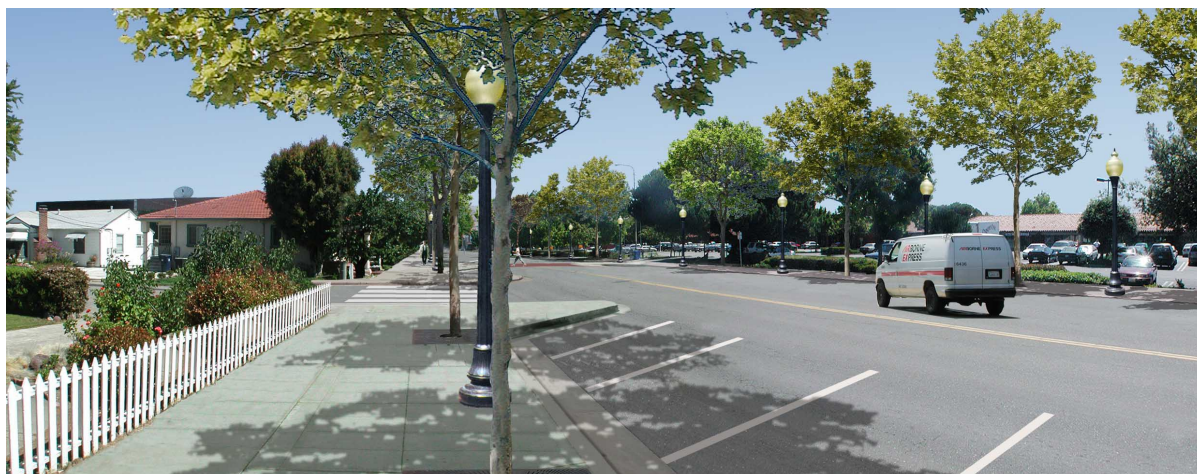


Figure 4-6B. Simulation of Capitol Avenue with Streetscape Improvements Only

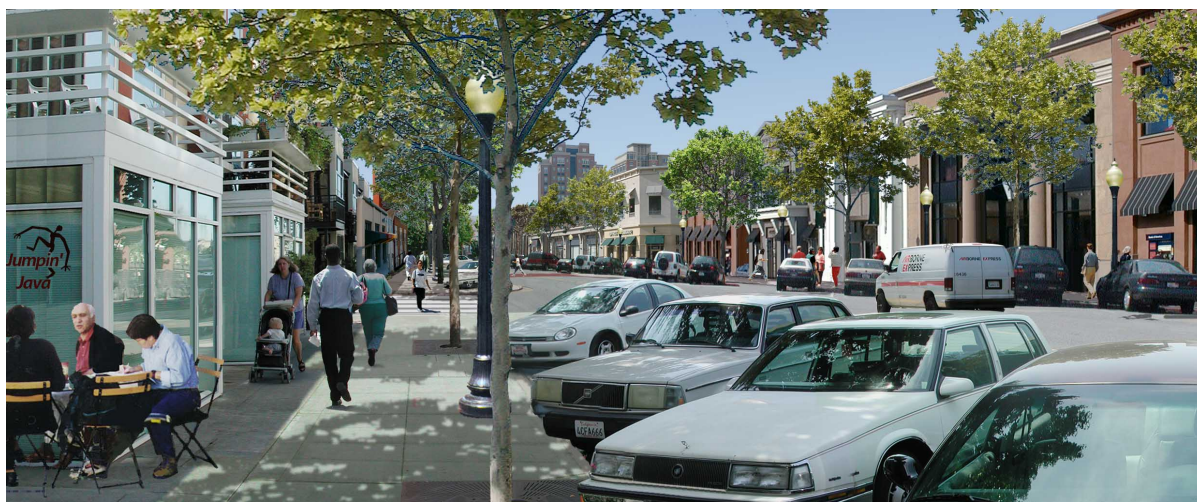


Figure 4-6C. Simulation of Capitol Avenue with Streetscape Improvements and New Buildings

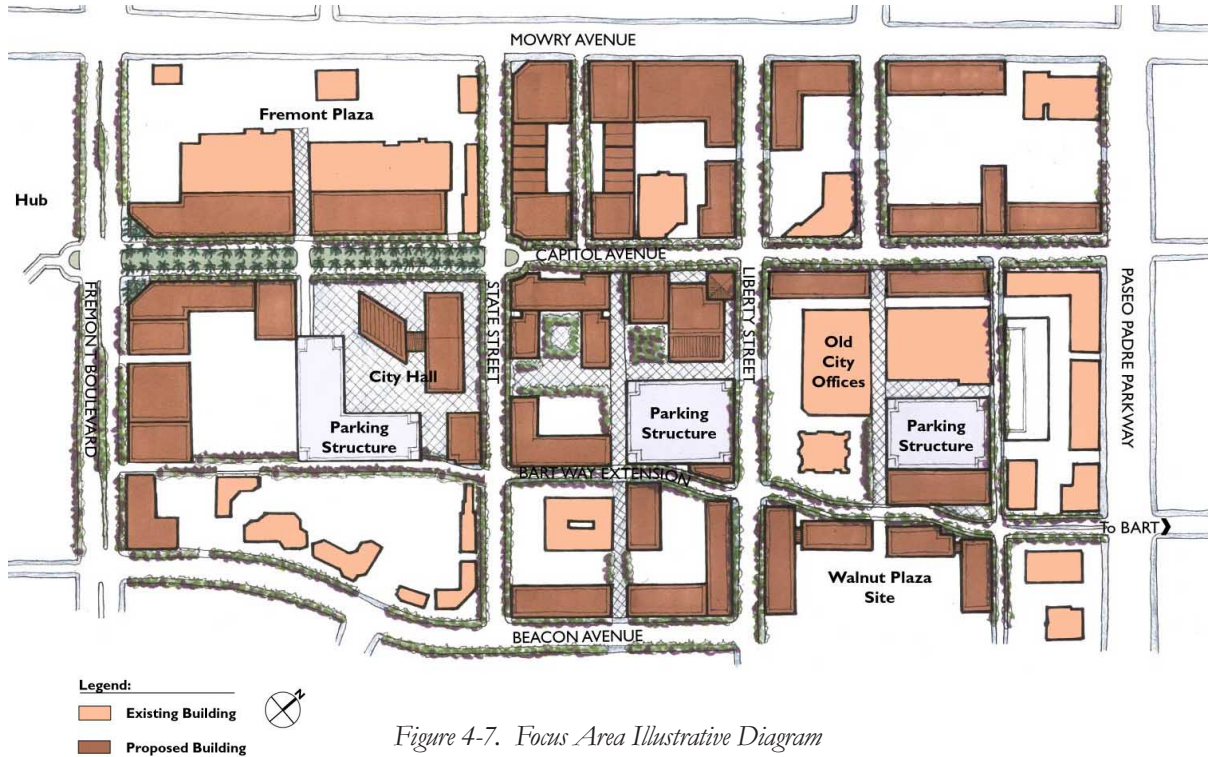


Figure 4-7. Focus Area Illustrative Diagram

and allowing for a more prominent location for a future City Hall building to be located along Capitol Avenue or State Street. Sites along Capitol have also been suggested as possible locations for a Cultural Arts Center which would further enhance the “main street” character of this important street. A vision for Capitol Avenue is illustrated in Figure 4-6.

The block sizes in the Focus Area would be reduced through the construction of new streets, improved private roadways and new pedestrian walkways. These additions to the street network are described in more detail in Chapter 5. They would serve to add interest for pedestrians and would increase pedestrian circulation opportunities in the Focus Area, thereby making pedestrian trips more comfortable

and enjoyable. One of these new streets would be an extension of BART Way as a local roadway from Fremont Boulevard to Paseo Padre Parkway. The extension would connect at Paseo Padre Parkway with another future extension of the street through the Gateway Plaza shopping center, as described in Section B.3, below. Development of these new streets would occur as properties redeveloped.

The illustrative drawing shown in Figure 4-7 indicates how the Focus Area might look if future redevelopment of the area were to occur under the principles contained in the Concept Plan. Currently, the Focus Area contains approximately 1,240,000 square feet of commercial space. Under the Concept Plan, a total of 1,970,000 square feet might be developed,

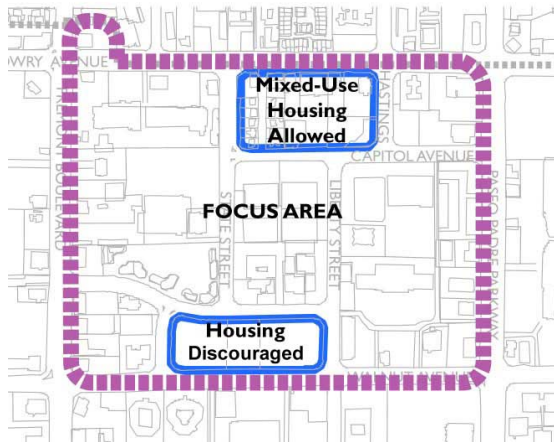


Figure 4-8. Consensus Mixed-Use Residential and Non-Residential Areas in the Focus Area

as indicated in Table 4-1 on page 45 of this document.

High density housing in the focus area would be allowed only as part of a mixed use project that incorporated commercial use and where retail uses fronted on the ground floor along any of the of the pedestrian oriented streets. One area in the Focus Area has been specifically identified as a potential mixed use/residential location: the area bordered by State Street, Capitol Avenue, Hastings Street and Mowry. Mixed use/housing could be allowed elsewhere in the Focus Area, depending on the degree to which it contributed to the commercial/retail vitality of the area and included a significant commercial component. Housing is discouraged on the last large vacant parcel in the CBD, bordered by Liberty Street, Walnut Avenue, Beacon Avenue and California Street, as mapped in Figure 4-8.

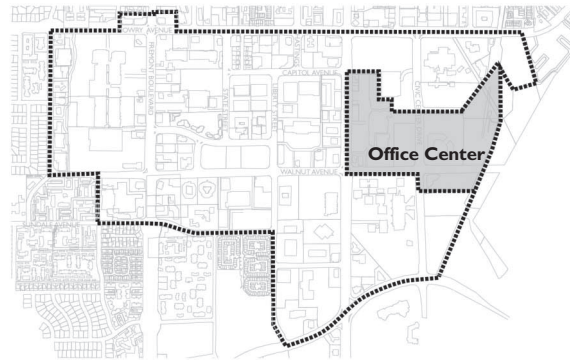


Figure 4-9. Office Center Location

3. Office Center

The General Plan notes that “projects within one-half mile of the BART Station should be high intensity . . .” The concept underlying the General Plan, and reinforced by this Concept Plan, is that the highest intensity of use in the city should be located within easy walking distance of BART to take maximum advantage of the regional access provided by BART. Accordingly, the Office Center would be located directly adjacent to the BART Station. This area would be further bounded on the west by Paseo Padre Parkway, extending one parcel to the south of Walnut Avenue and meeting the Washington Hospital property at BART Way.

Although a portion of this area is currently a shopping center, this area would be converted over the long term to high-rise office buildings between four and twelve stories in height, designed to preserve

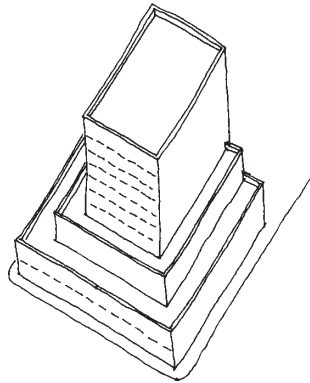


Figure 4-10. Tower Building Massing

view corridors as described in Chapter 6. These buildings would be likely to have “bases” of two to four stories with taller towers on top, as shown in Figure 4-10. This concept would accommodate view corridor preservation, provision of pedestrian-oriented uses, and internal parking systems. Towers should be located to support view corridor preservation, which would be required in this subdistrict. The existing shopping center would not be displaced, but as land values near the BART station increase, higher intensity office uses, would be constructed when the market is ready to absorb them.

Additionally, portions of the BART property may also be developed through joint development partnerships, at such time as replacement parking could be accommodated through parking structures. This will become even more likely when the BART extension to Warm Springs and San Jose is completed.

Any new development around the BART station area should also incorporate enhancements to the

Tule Pond area, as called for in Section D. Other properties adjacent to the Tule Pond area should also provide enhanced visual access to the open space area.

When new development occurs, an extension of BART Way connecting Civic Center Drive through to Paseo Padre Parkway would also be developed. This new street could be designed to be a new pedestrian-oriented local roadway, as described in Chapter 5. Local circulation would be enhanced in this subdistrict through the construction of the new street. The subdistrict is defined at its periphery by the existing arterial streets.

This subdistrict currently accommodates approximately 786,000 square feet of commercial space, including 235,000 square feet of retail space at the Gateway Plaza shopping center. It could accommodate up to a total of 2,654,000 square feet of office and retail space under the Concept Plan.

4. Medical Areas

There are two Medical Areas located within the CBD, both of which are occupied by established medical facilities. These facilities include Washington Hospital, which is located along Mowry and spans Civic Center Drive, and Kaiser's Medical Center located at Walnut Avenue and Civic Center Drive, as shown in Figure 4-11.

The medical industry is changing rapidly, and both major facilities have the capacity to grow and change. Therefore, hospital and medical uses would be prioritized within these areas. In the Medical Areas, maximum allowable building heights would be up to 12 stories, as in the Office Center. This will permit the hospitals to expand vertically as appropriate to their needs and the character of the CBD subdistrict.

Not all of the entire Kaiser Medical property is included in the Medical Area. This is not intended to prevent expansion of the hospital in the South of Walnut Area, but rather to allow flexibility for the current user and guide the intensity of development to be consistent with the remainder of the CBD Concept Plan.

Other medical facilities such as the Fremont Hospital and the Palo Alto Medical Center are not included as part of the Medical Areas. Medical uses would be allowed in other parts of the CBD as well as in the Medical Areas, and they would follow design guidelines for those areas.

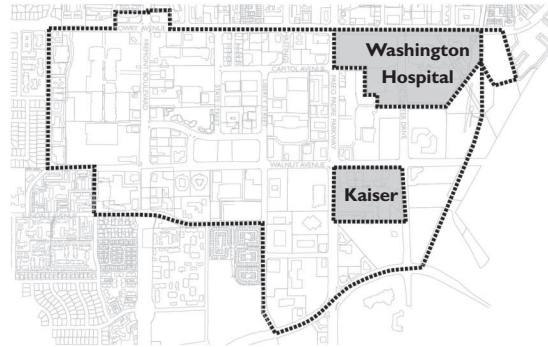


Figure 4-11. Medical Area Locations

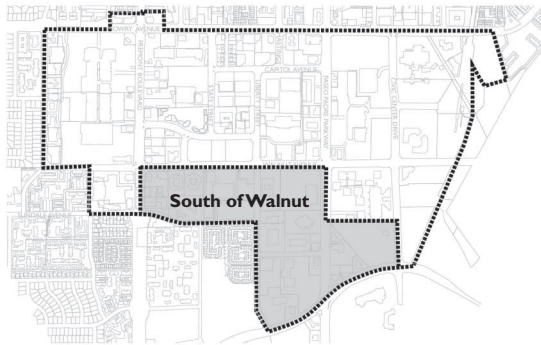


Figure 4-12. South of Walnut Area Location

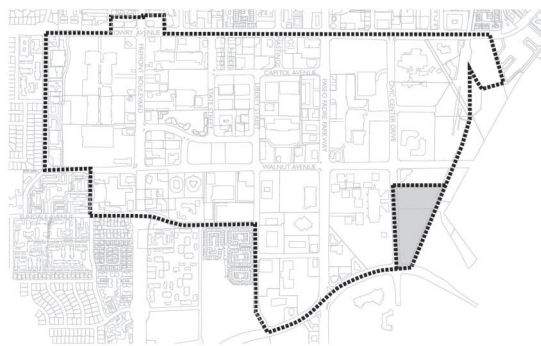


Figure 4-13. Civic Center Drive Mixed-Use Location

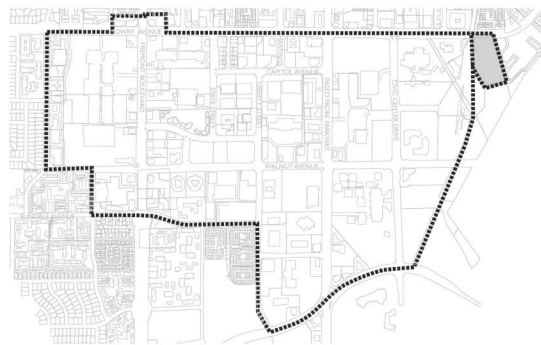


Figure 4-14. BART Residential Site Location

5. South of Walnut Area

The South of Walnut Area is the portion of the CBD located to the south of Walnut Avenue, as shown in Figure 4-12. The South of Walnut Area would continue to be characterized by essentially the same type of development as is already occurring in the area. With pedestrian-oriented development in other parts of the CBD, there will remain a need to retain some areas for automobile-oriented, non-intensive offices and other uses. This is the type of development currently present in the South of Walnut Area, and it will continue under this Plan. The consultant team estimates that a total of approximately 600,000 square feet of new development is possible for the area.

6. Civic Center Drive Mixed-Use Residential Site

The Civic Center Drive Mixed-Use Residential Site is currently under construction and not expected to change within the planning timeframe of the Concept Plan.

7. BART Residential Site

The proposed Residential Site located adjacent to the BART station is shown in Figure 4-14. This area could be developed with a high-density, 100% residential project or a mixed-use project at such time that the existing parking on the site could be replaced in parking structures elsewhere on the BART property. Residential development would be consistent with adjacent residential uses to the east, and should be designed to support transit-oriented development principles of locating high-intensity uses adjacent to transit stations. Mixed-use development would

also be consistent with transit-oriented development principles. If possible, development planning for the site and for this side of the BART Station should seek to incorporate the existing Tule Pond and celebrate it as a historical, biological and environmental resource, as called for in Section D.

B. Enhanced Street Network

The Concept Diagram shown in Figure 4-1 indicates several important CBD streets that should receive particular attention. Possible streetscape designs for each of these streets are shown in Chapter 5. The primary intent of these streets and their purpose under this Concept Plan is described below.

1. Capitol Avenue

Capitol Avenue would become the “Main Street” of the Focus Area, and would create a connection from Fremont Boulevard into the Focus Area via an extension through the new City Hall property. The street would provide a ceremonial entry into the Focus Area that would be recognizable for the large number of motorists on Fremont Boulevard. East of State Street, Capitol Avenue would be a more traditional main street, with on-street diagonal parking and pedestrian-oriented retail buildings on the ground floor.

2. State Street

State Street would also become an important street in the Focus Area. It would function as a cross-axis to Capitol Avenue, thereby creating a critical corner at the Capitol/State intersection. This intersection would become a prime retail and destination location.

3. BART Way

BART Way would be extended through the existing Gateway Plaza shopping center if that center were redeveloped with high density office uses. This new extension of BART Way would be developed with ground floor pedestrian-oriented land uses, such as retail stores, restaurants and personal services. BART Way would also extend through the Focus Area to Fremont Boulevard.

4. Fremont Boulevard

Fremont Boulevard is one of the most significant arterial streets that pass through the CBD, connecting the CBD to the rest of the city to the north and south. Special streetscape designs for this street in the CBD would serve to announce entry into the CBD. Gateway design elements at the intersection of Fremont Boulevard and the Capitol Avenue extension would draw people into the Focus Area.

One of the additional functions of the design for Fremont Boulevard would be to create a relationship between the Focus Area and the Hub. At the present time, Fremont Boulevard creates a barrier between the two subdistricts due to the high traffic volumes and the width of the street. The new intersection at Capitol Avenue will help to improve this connection, because it will create a direct connection to the Hub Area from the Focus Area.

C. Civic Uses

This section identifies civic uses in the Focus Area that are significant for the realization of the goals of the Concept Plan.

- ◆ **City Hall and Civic Plaza.** The City has recently acquired property for a new City Hall and Civic Plaza at the intersection of State Street and Capitol Avenue. The construction of this new City Hall and Civic Plaza can serve as an important catalyst project for the CBD, and for the Focus Area in particular. The plaza will also provide a key outdoor space for the Focus Area.
- ◆ **Cultural Arts Center.** A new Cultural Arts Center should be developed in the Focus Area of the CBD, to provide cultural, fine arts and theatrical facilities to the people of Fremont and its visitors. This Center should especially support multi-cultural group functions and provide a venue to reflect the City's ethnic diversity in the arts. In order to meet this goal, the City should select and purchase a site for a new Cultural Arts Center in the near term. The site should be used as a public open space until the public supports the construction of the Cultural Arts Center, possibly through a bond issue. Figure 4-15 identifies several potential sites for the Cultural Arts Center. The Walnut/Beacon site is preferred.

In plans prepared for a possible Cultural Arts Center in Central Park, it was to include a total of 89,000 square feet, including approximately 55,000 square feet in two theaters and 25,000 square feet for a museum. During peak hours, the assumed parking demand would have been 675 spaces. If a facility of similar size and character were to be located in the Focus Area, it would need a site of 2-1/2 to 4 acres for its parking structure and a civic open space. However, planning for the Cultural Arts Center in Central Park occurred some years ago and it is necessary to update that work for a location in the Focus Area in terms of budget, programming and facility size.

The Cultural Arts Center should provide a prominent landmark building and plaza in the CBD, easily accessible and within close proximity to Capitol Avenue, which will be the Focus Area's main street. The Center should be well-served by a range of transit amenities, such as the BART shuttle, regional bus access and pedestrian and bicycle amenities. The construc-

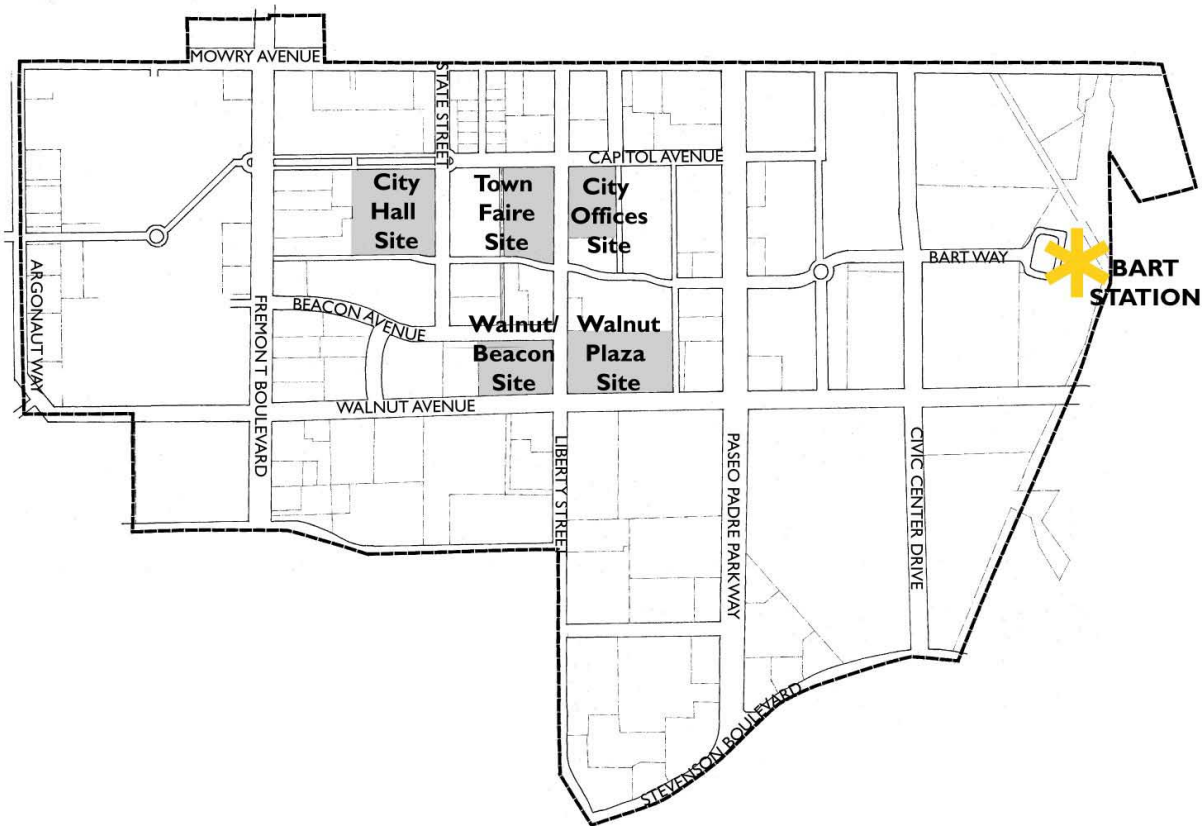


Figure 4-15. Potential Cultural Art Center Sites

tion of the Cultural Arts Center would reinforce the CBD Concept Plan goals to create a recognizable and memorable Downtown, and also to reflect Fremont's cultural diversity in the design and development of a city center.

D. Open Spaces, Gateways and Signage

This section describes potential open space, gateway and signage improvements that would be developed under the Concept Plan.



Figure 4-16. Potential Locations of Open Space

1. Open Space Network

Publicly accessible open spaces will be a key aspect of creating a true downtown for Fremont. An enhanced network of open spaces linked by pedestrian passages and streetscapes is shown in Figure 4-16. These open spaces would include a new civic plaza, a potential expansion of Williams Park, and other privately-developed open spaces as part of development projects. The development of open space in the CBD would not be limited to those spaces shown in Figure 4-16. In fact, many other open spaces are likely to be developed privately

through the incentive program described in Chapter 6.

All open spaces, including both public and private spaces, should be developed with active adjacent uses such as shops and restaurants, in order to ensure that they are lively, active spaces.

The specific open spaces shown in Figure 4-16 are as follows:

- ◆ **Potential Williams Park Expansion (1).** The expansion of Williams Park, if implemented,

could include almost a tripling in size of the existing park. The added park area could extend to the west to connect to the Fremont Hub shopping area. The added area would create a significant greenspace at the core of the new mixed-use shopping district. The exact configuration and size of the expansion area would be determined at the time the Hub might completely redevelop, as described in Section A.

In addition to providing public open space for recreational and social activities, the Williams Park Expansion would provide a distinctive view down the BART Way View Corridor to the Fremont Hills. The redeveloped Hub area would thus be visually connected to the Focus Area by this expanded open space. The park could become a significant landmark open space for people to gather in the greater CBD area.

The City should explore options with the Hub for making better use of the Carriage House for public use, such as for a visitor center, community information agency, meeting center or video conference center. The Carriage House should not be allowed to continue in its current unfinished condition.

- ◆ **Hub Roundabout (2).** Any future development of new streets in the Hub Area will provide a key location for a new plaza or open space. The key intersection of the new streets could be enhanced with a roundabout featuring landscaping or a fountain.



*Figure 4-17. Potential Capitol Avenue Gateway Design
(Source: Town and Country Shopping Center, San Jose)*

- ◆ **Capitol Avenue Gateway (3).** As part of the Capitol Avenue extension to Fremont Boulevard, one option would be to construct a new landscaped median plaza. This new gateway could be used for lunch concerts, strolling and festivals. It could be landscaped with both lawn and pavement areas to provide a range of use opportunities. Landscaping would provide a landmark focus for the area and would provide shade for the users. The area could also include cafes and kiosks, as shown in Figure 4-17.

The gateway would be visually accessible from the Civic Offices and Council Chambers, providing a stately open space in front of the buildings. Because of the greenway's scale, it would be a prominent ceremonial space for public functions. It would also help to connect the CBD visually with Fremont Boulevard, and to preserve views to the Fremont Hills via the Capitol Avenue View Corridor.

- ◆ **City Hall Plaza (4).** Along with the construction of new City Offices, a City Hall plaza would be constructed that would incorporate a series of new and varied open spaces surrounding the new buildings. The open spaces could provide places for people to gather and socialize. The outdoor plaza would set the stage for the civic buildings, permitting public meetings to occur both indoors and outdoors as appropriate. This space should also be designed to accommodate a range of day-to-day outdoor uses, including lunching, people-watching, and outdoor music and theater events, and should be adjacent to retail and restaurant uses on the ground floors facing the plaza.
- ◆ **Capitol Avenue Courtyards (5).** Several courtyards could be privately developed along the pedestrian passages parallel to Capitol Avenue. These spaces could be plazas or green space areas that might be visible from Capitol Avenue, pedestrian passages, or building lobbies and atrium spaces.
- ◆ **State Street Plaza (6).** At the southern terminus of State Street at Beacon Avenue, a new private open space could be developed. This open space could be a plaza or outdoor greenspace that would provide a visual closure to the street.
- ◆ **Cultural Arts Center and Plaza (7).** This is one of several sites that could be developed as a new Cultural Arts Center (CAC) with an associated outdoor space. The CAC open space should be designed to reflect the multi-cultural facets of the CAC, and would be an excellent venue for public art.
- ◆ **Walnut Plaza (8).** A new privately developed plaza could be constructed at the intersection of the pedestrian walkways as part of the redevelopment of Walnut Plaza Shopping Center.
- ◆ **County Plaza (9).** The existing outdoor space adjacent to the County building at Walnut Avenue and Paseo Padre Parkway could be redesigned and revitalized to create an additional outdoor space for the CBD.
- ◆ **Office Center Roundabout (10).** The construction of the BART Way extension through the Gateway Plaza Shopping Center could incorporate a new roundabout, which could be designed as a green open space or fountain.
- ◆ **Office Building Courtyard (11).** The courtyard at the center of the existing office building is an existing open space that will be part of the new open space network. This is an example of the type of open space that will be provided as part of an open space pedestrian network with future development.
- ◆ **BART Plaza (12).** The turnaround in front of the BART Station could be redesigned as a park or plaza. This space would provide a terminus to BART Way at the station, and would create a public open space that could be used by transit patrons and Office Center Subdis-

trict workers. The plaza and turnaround should incorporate bus transfer and drop-off facilities for the BART station.

- ◆ **Tule Pond (13).** Opportunities for enhanced visual and physical access to the Tule Pond should be explored as part of any new development undertaken in the areas around the BART station. Any enhancements to the pond area should ensure that it is celebrated as an historical, biological and environmental resource.

- ◆ **Central Park (14).** Central Park will be connected to the CBD's open space network via pedestrian connections and enhancements to Civic Center Drive, as suggested in Chapter 5.

2. Gateways

Several key locations should be developed as new landscaped gateways to the CBD. These sites are significant entry points into the CBD and should be improved to reflect their importance. The proposed gateway locations could include the street intersections shown in Figure 4-18. The City should de-

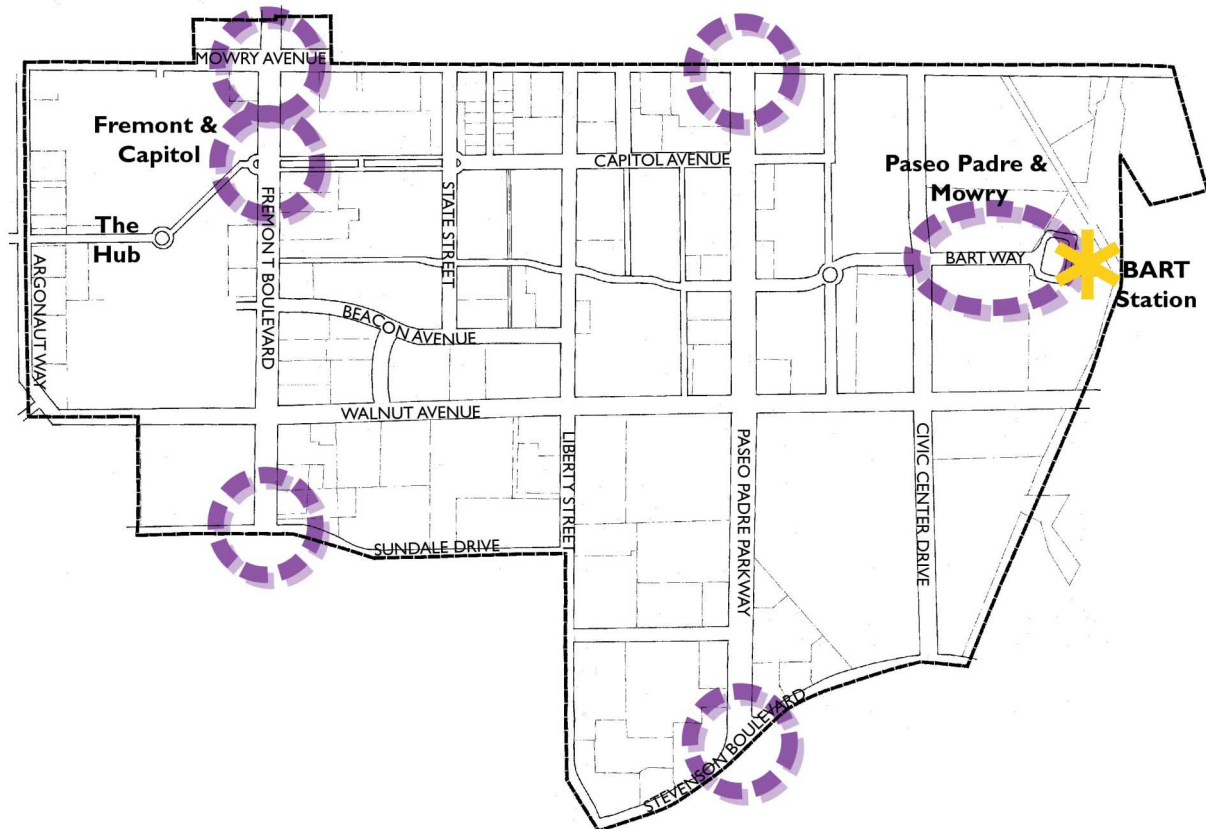


Figure 4-18. Gateway Sites

velop a gateway program for CBD gateways that might include enhancements such as special paving, landscaping and other gateway features.

3. *Signage Program*

A signage program should be undertaken to provide residents and visitors a better sense of orientation in the CBD. Signage to and from the five historic districts, Mission Boulevard, Interstate 880, and Interstate 680 could be provided, along with signage indicating major CBD destinations. The signage program should include special gateway signs at the CBD entries described above. Other signage should promote bicycle routes and lanes and indicate parking locations.

4. *Open Space Improvements*

Open space improvements, such as fountains, sculpture and public art, should be implemented as a key means of creating quality open space areas. They can also reflect the multi-cultural and ethnic diversity of Fremont's population.

E. View Corridors

The views of the surrounding open hillsides are a major asset of the CBD. To the east are spectacular, wide-open vistas of the Fremont Hills and of Mission Peak to the south.

This Concept Plan includes a set of view corridors to preserve views from the CBD. Taller buildings, where allowed, must be stepped back beyond the edge of the corridor. Above grade pedestrian bridges would not be permitted in the view corridors.

There are six identified view corridors in the CBD, which are shown in Figure 4-19 and described below:

- ◆ **Capitol Avenue View Corridor.** The Capitol Avenue View Corridor would extend from Fremont Boulevard to Civic Center Drive. Views in this corridor would be preserved in the street itself and through a two-story height limit along the street. On Capitol Avenue, the view corridor would extend 30 feet beyond the Capitol Avenue build-to line on both sides of the street. The existing Washington Hospital tower and its pedestrian bridge are located in the view corridor. Over the next 20 years, the Hospital District may be required to demolish the existing tower to meet State mandated earthquake safety requirements. To meet the long term health care needs of the community and respond to the need to replace the existing tower, the District has been working on the long term master plan for its property. At any time, the Hospital may also face emergency needs that would re-

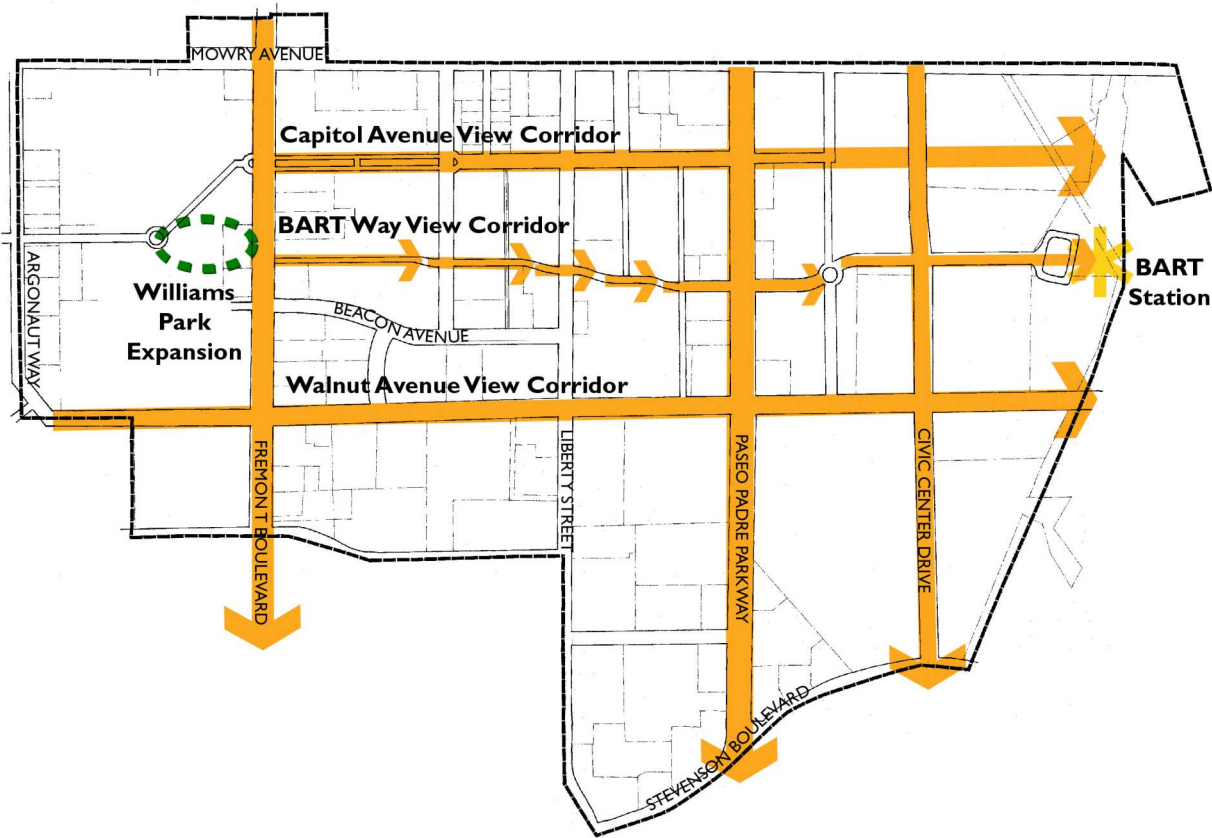


Figure 4-19. CBD View Corridors

quire it to act quickly to build facilities. In recognition of the District's needs, the City requests that the Hospital District consider preserving a view corridor extending along an extension of Capitol Avenue as it prepares its master plans for its site. The City recognizes that emergency or other Hospital needs may prevent it from accommodating this request.

- ◆ **BART Way View Corridor.** The BART Way View Corridor would extend from Fremont Boulevard at the expanded Williams Park to the Fremont BART Station. Along the BART Way view corridor, views would be preserved within the street right-of-way.

- ◆ **Walnut Avenue View Corridor.** The Walnut Avenue View Corridor would extend from Argonaut Way to the edge of the CBD boundary. Along the Walnut Avenue view corridor, views would be preserved within the street right-of-way.
- ◆ **Mission Peak View Corridors.** Fremont Boulevard, Paseo Padre Parkway, and Civic Center Drive would provide three view corridors south to Mission Peak. In these view corridors, views would be preserved within the street rights-of way.

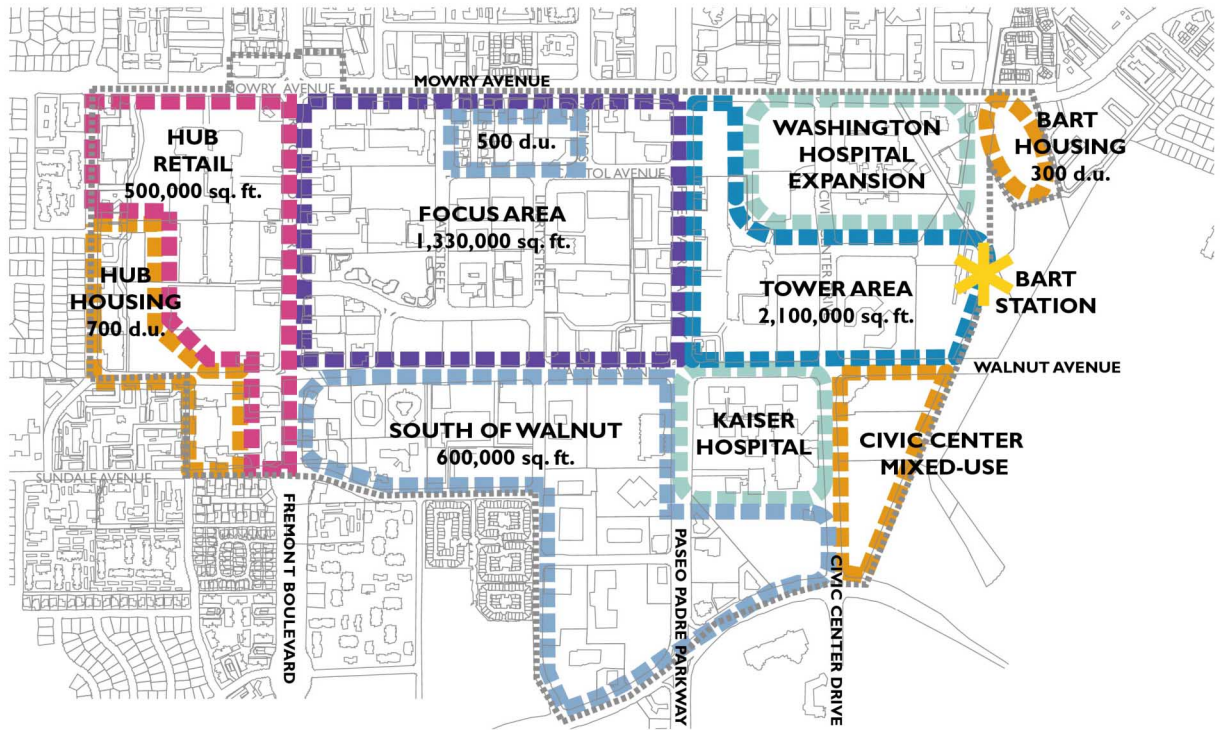


Figure 4-20. Additional Development Potential

F. CBD Development Potential

This Concept Plan proposes new development at higher intensities than currently exist in the CBD. The consultant team assessed the physical development potential for the entire CBD to determine the development potential at these higher intensities on vacant, infill and redevelopment sites over the next 20 years. The results are illustrated in Figure 4-20, and in Table 4-1. These estimates indicate potential development, not development entitlements. As shown, the CBD could support up to a total of 4.5 million square feet of new commercial development and up to 1,500 new residential units.

When reviewed against market studies for the CBD conducted for this project, the data indicates that the market might not support this level of development over the next 20 years. Therefore, highest intensity uses would be concentrated in key subdistricts, as described in Section A, above, and key civic improvements would be undertaken to catalyze new private development in specific locations.

TABLE 4-1. **EXISTING AND POTENTIAL SQUARE FOOTAGE¹**

	Hub Area	Focus Area²	Tower Area at BART	South of Walnut	Other Areas	Totals
Existing Sq. Ft. ³	950,000	1,240,000	800,000	1,280,000	850,000	5,120,000
Sq. Ft. to be Removed ⁴	-550,000	-600,000	-250,000	0	0	-1,400,000
Sq. Ft. to Remain	400,000	640,000	550,000	1,280,000	850,000	3,720,000
New Potential Sq Ft.	500,000	1,330,000	2,100,000	600,000	0	4,530,000
Total Sq. Ft.	900,000	1,970,000	2,650,000	1,880,000	850,000	8,250,000
Housing Units	700	500	300	0	0	1,500

¹Square footage estimates were calculated based on likely CBD development patterns under the Concept Plan, and included criteria such as likely building location, orientation and appropriate building depths for retail and office uses. Square footage figures were estimated from a sketch drawing of possible future development using these criteria. Residential units were estimated based on an approximation of 1,200 square feet per unit (including 20% for circulation), and double checked against approximate densities of 50 to 70 dwelling units to the acre.

²Focus Area square footage does not include estimated square footage for City Hall.

³Existing square footage figures include square footage currently under construction or with building permits issued. These figures do not include other proposed square footage, such as projects which have received Planning Commission approval but do not have building permits issued because they are on hold. Does not include residential square footage.

⁴This is the area that would be removed as part of future redevelopment.

4: CBD CONCEPT

5 STREET NETWORK AND PARKING

One of the goals of the Concept Plan is “to improve streetscape design in the CBD.” Therefore, the public and private transportation circulation systems should be improved to better support vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and transit circulation. This chapter outlines the improvements suggested to improve the street network and designs. A number of new streets are proposed, as well as streetscape improvements to existing streets in the CBD, as outlined below.

A. CBD Street Network

Overall, circulation in the CBD would be supported by a system of parkway arterial streets, parkway collectors, pedestrian-oriented streets, local roadways and pedestrian walkways, as shown in Figure 5-1. These street types are described below:

- ◆ **Reconfigured Pedestrian-Oriented Streets.**
Some existing streets in the CBD can be reconfigured as pedestrian-oriented streets primarily intended for trips inside the CBD. Given

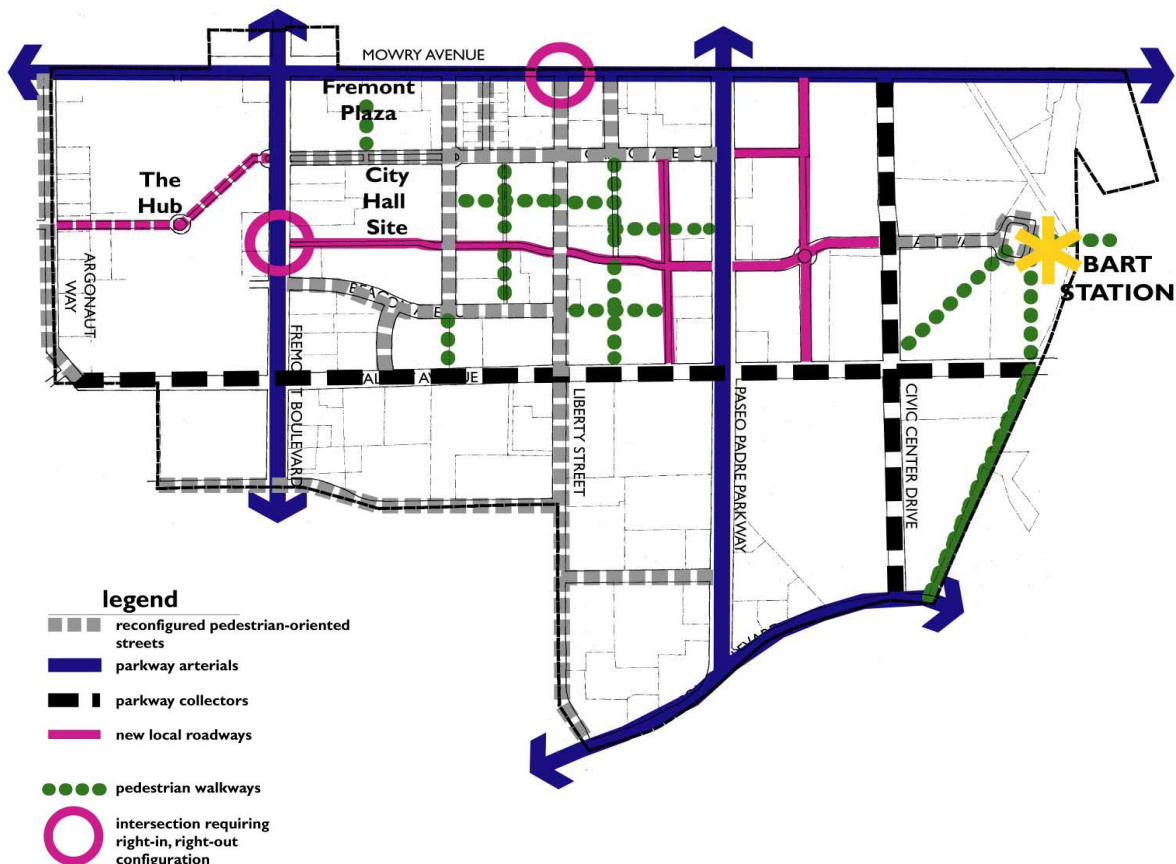


Figure 5-1. Existing and Proposed CBD Street Network

their low traffic volumes and localized activity, these streets may possibly be narrowed and have on-street parking, provided that detailed parking analysis indicates this is feasible. In the CBD, these streets include Capitol Avenue, State Street, Beacon Street and Liberty Street, Argonaut Way, Hastings Street, and Kearney Street.

- ◆ **Parkway Arterials.** Parkway arterials are wide, heavy volume traffic streets that support City-wide traffic volumes. These streets include Fremont Boulevard and Paseo Padre Parkway, Mowry Avenue and Stevenson Boulevard.
- ◆ **Parkway Collectors.** Parkway collectors are lower-volume, smaller streets that provide more local circulation than the parkway arterials. In the CBD, these streets would include Civic Center Drive and Walnut Avenue.
- ◆ **New Local Roadways.** New local roadways would be constructed to lessen block sizes and improve local pedestrian-oriented circulation. They would also provide access to parking and local businesses.
- ◆ **Pedestrian Walkways.** Pedestrian-walkways would be utilized to provide inter-subdistrict pedestrian circulation to and from important destinations such as Capitol Avenue and City Hall, and to parking facilities within a subdistrict. Pedestrian walkways should also be considered along private driveways and elsewhere as may be needed to provide adequate and continuous pedestrian access to buildings and parking areas from public streets.

More detail regarding each street type is included in Section C, below.

B. Expansion of the Street Network

A fundamental element of the Concept Plan is the expansion and enhancement of the existing street network in the CBD. Currently, the blocks in the CBD are large, with few pedestrian amenities. Several new streets will be introduced to create shorter, more walkable blocks and increase circulation options within the CBD. The proposed street network additions are illustrated in Figure 5-2, and include a series of new major streets, local roadways and pedestrian walkways.

1. Connectors to Existing Streets

Two new streets would be created in the Focus Area to connect to existing streets. These streets would be extensions of Capitol Avenue and Liberty Street. They would connect from the CBD core to the outer edges of the Focus Area. The new intersection created at Liberty Street and Mowry Avenue would be limited to right-in /right-out configurations, so no new traffic signal would be required.

2. New Local Roadways

A series of new pedestrian-oriented local roadways is also proposed. The proposed locations for the new local roadways have been determined based on block size, the need for better connections, and the locations of existing private driveways that might be improved. The new local roadways would be designed to meet the standards described in Section C, below.

Locations for the local roadways are shown on Figure 5-2. An alternative alignment for a BART Way extension is shown in Figure 5-3.

Alignments within the Hub are conceptual only, and should be refined when new development takes place there. However, the key concept is to provide a connection between the signalized intersection on Fremont Boulevard and the intersection of Argonaut Way and Sacramento Avenue. Similarly, the location of the local roadway shown on the Washington West property extending north/south between Paseo Padre and Civic Center is conceptual. Here, the key

concept is to provide additional roadway capacity to the area proposed to be the most intensively developed in the CBD and to divide the large blocks that currently discourage pedestrian activity. This roadway would be provided as development is proposed in the area immediately adjacent to it over the next 20 years or longer. While it is recognized that meeting the emergency needs of the Hospital district may preclude such a roadway from being developed, the City requests that this road be factored into the Hospital's long term master planning to the degree feasible.

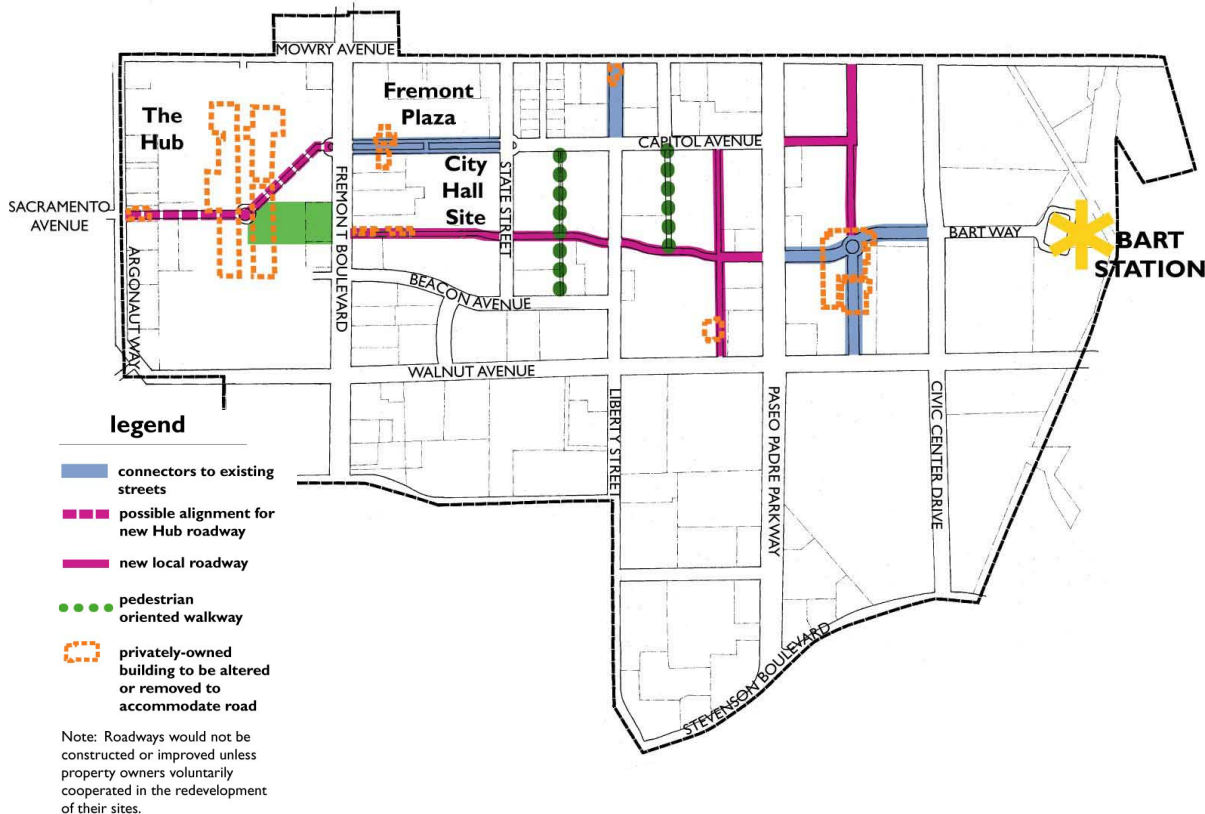


Figure 5-2. Proposed Circulation Network Expansion

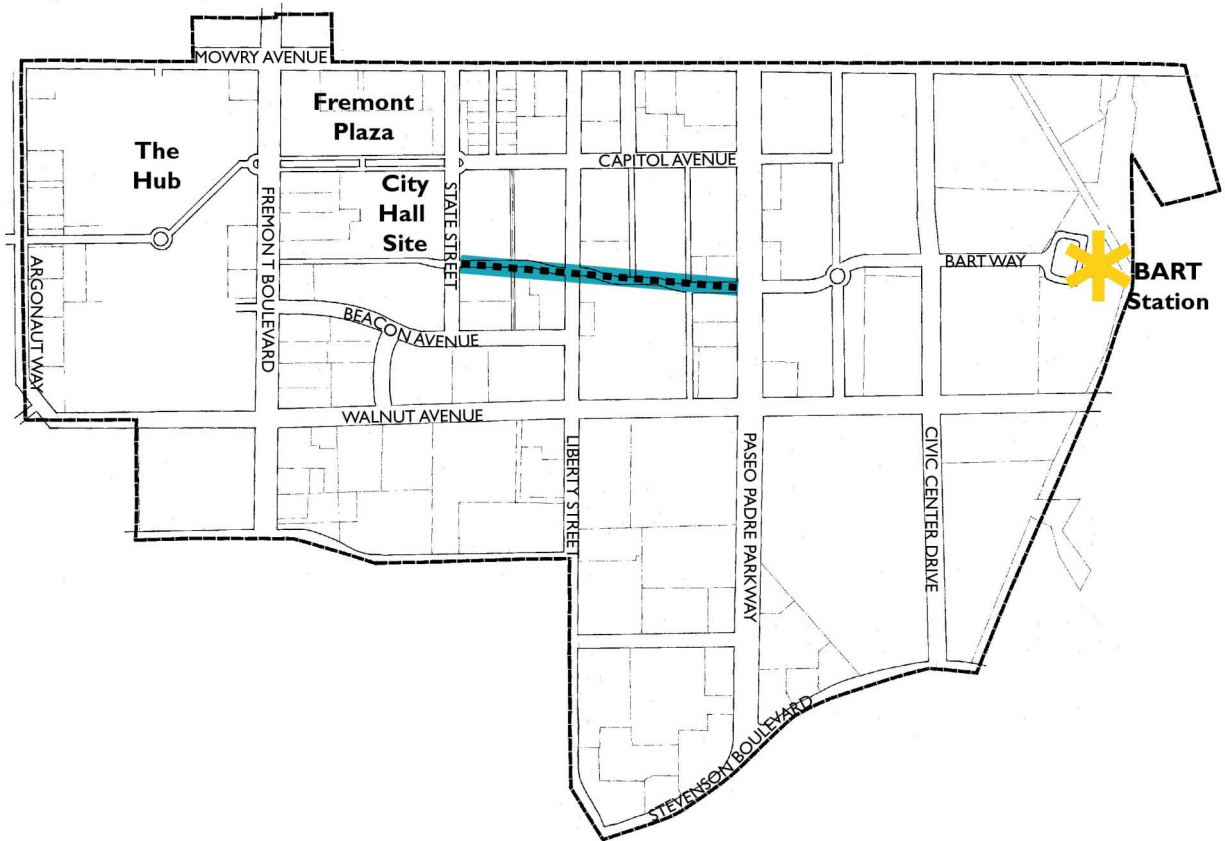


Figure 5-3. *Alternative BART Way Alignment*

3. *New Pedestrian Walkways*

New pedestrian walkways are proposed to help reduce block sizes in the Focus Area and to provide access to parking facilities located behind buildings.

In the short-term, the provision of a pedestrian walkway from the BART station to Fremont Boulevard should be considered as an extension of the Gateway Plaza pedestrian way, and along portions of the future BART way extension through the Gas Light shopping center.

C. Streetscape Design

This section describes proposed design treatments for the CBD street network. The illustrations show ideas among many possible concepts.

1. *Capitol Avenue as “Main Street”*

Capitol Avenue should be developed as a “Main Street” within the Focus Area, and would thus become the primary retail destination and most memorable place within the CBD. Capitol Avenue would therefore be improved along its length for several

blocks and would be extended between the block of Fremont Boulevard and Liberty Street, creating an expanded intersection at the Fremont Hub. An illustration of Capitol Avenue is shown in Figure 5-4. Capitol Avenue would have two distinct segments:

- ◆ **Gateway Segment.** Between Fremont Boulevard and State Street, Capitol Avenue would be designed as a grand entry to the CBD. One possible design for this segment is shown in Figure 5-5. The overall intent on this segment would be to create a widened and stately entrance into the CBD Focus Area that could be a gateway or plaza area. This would create a prominent visual connection from the highly traveled area of Fremont Boulevard into the “Main Street” and civic areas of the new city center and provide open space opportunities
- ◆ **Retail Street Segment.** Further east, the “Main Street” portion of Capitol Avenue would be configured as a pedestrian-oriented street, which would accommodate improved vehicular circulation and diagonal on-street parking. Retail-type uses and storefront design would be required for all buildings along this segment of Capitol Avenue. Other provisions in the design guidelines would also help to define the urban

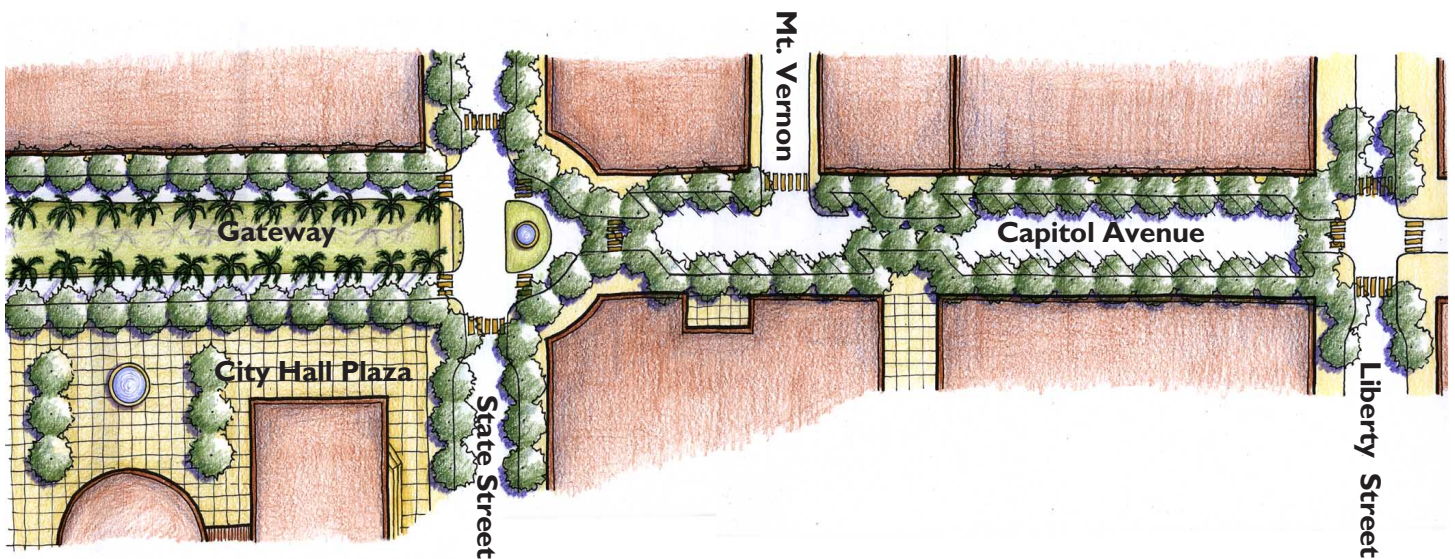


Figure 5-4. Potential Design for Capitol Avenue



Figure 5-5. Potential Design for the Gateway Segment of Capitol Avenue, as Viewed From Fremont Blvd.

character of the “Main Street” area. Along Capitol Avenue, buildings would be limited to two stories in height by both building stepback requirements and view corridor preservation. Streetscape elements would be carefully located to minimize impacts on pedestrian flow. Currently, the Capitol Avenue right-of-way varies from 86 feet to 90 feet. Capitol Avenue could be redesigned to accommodate wider sidewalks with streetscape elements such as street trees, streetlights and special paving. There would be one travel lane in each direction, on-street di-

agonal parking which could be paved for optional outdoor seating areas, and widened sidewalks on both sides of the street, as shown in Figure 5-6. The entire street width would be 102 feet wide.

2. Other Reconfigured Pedestrian-Oriented Streets

Pedestrian-oriented streets are those that are primarily intended for trips within the Focus Area. They can therefore be narrower, have on-street parking, and support lower traffic volumes. Traffic on these

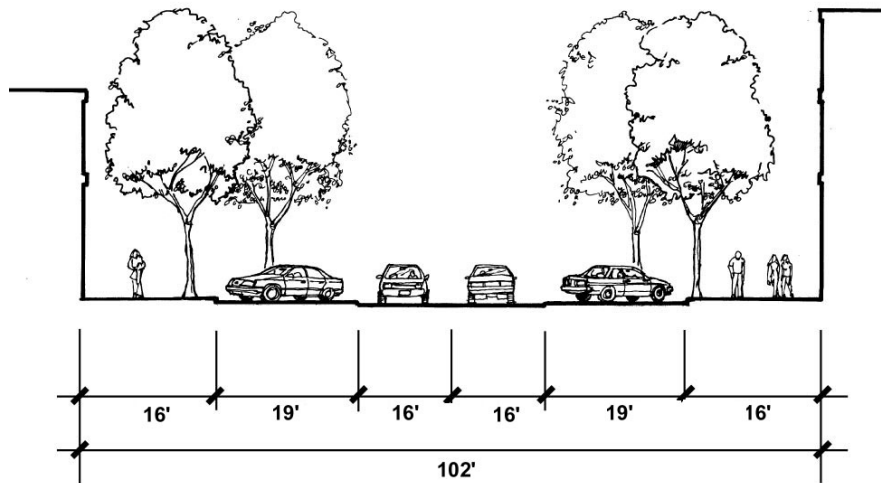


Figure 5-6. Potential Design for the Retail Segment of Capitol Avenue

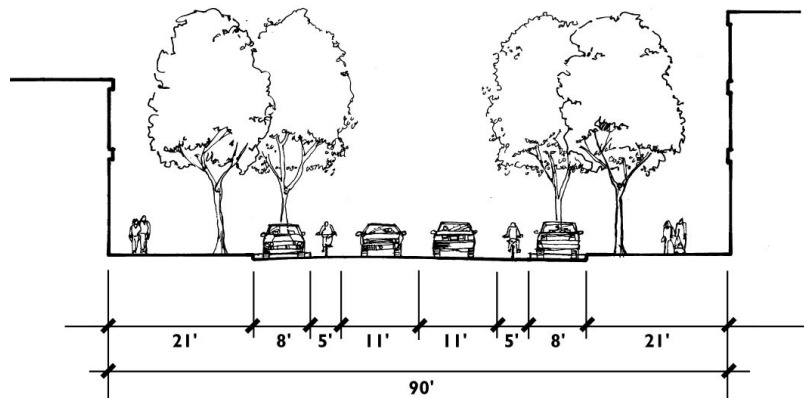


Figure 5-7. Reconfigured Pedestrian-Oriented Street Section

streets would be relatively slow-moving. These streets would include Beacon Avenue, State Street and Liberty Street, Argonaut Way, and Kearney Street.

These streets would form the internal circulation system within subdistricts. They would be designed

like the retail segment of Capitol Avenue, but with parallel on-street parking and wider sidewalks than on Capitol Avenue, as shown in Figure 5-7. These streets should accommodate bike lanes. The extension of Liberty Street through to Mowry Avenue would be designed according to this prototype.

5: STREET NETWORK AND PARKING

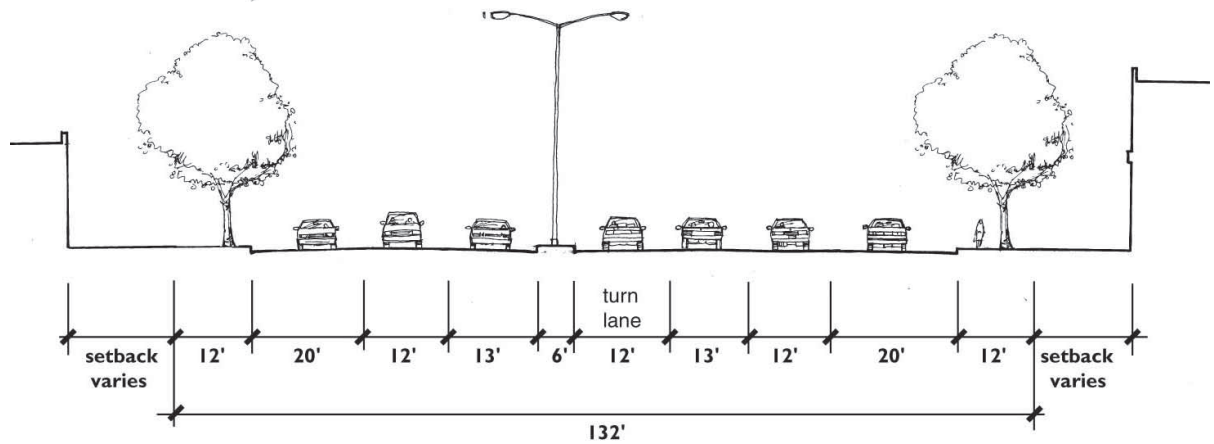


Figure 5-8. Fremont Boulevard Existing Condition

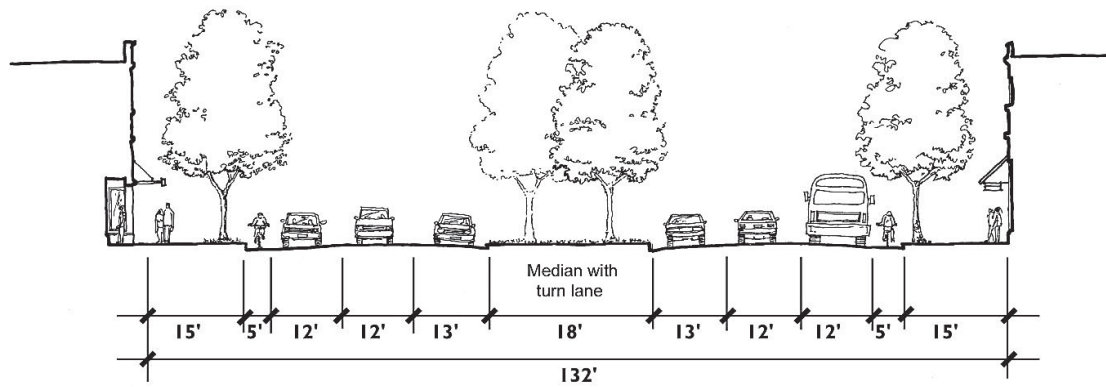


Figure 5-9. Potential Design for Fremont Boulevard

3. *Parkway Arterials*

Parkway arterials are wide, heavy volume traffic streets that support City-wide traffic volumes. These streets include Fremont Boulevard, Paseo Padre Parkway, Mowry Avenue and Stevenson Boulevard. These streets will serve primarily to bring people to and from the CBD. The character of these streets is intended to be that of lush gateways that are visually pleasant and provide ample capacity for travel.

The pedestrian crossings on these streets could also be improved. At signalized crossing locations, such as Fremont Boulevard/Capitol Avenue and the new intersection at Paseo Padre Parkway and BART Way, an expanded median could assist people in crossing the wide street by providing a protected break in the crossing.

- “ **Fremont Boulevard.** Over the long term, Fremont Boulevard could be reconfigured to include a wide planted median. The existing right-of-way for Fremont Boulevard is 132 feet, as shown in Figure 5-8. Within this right-of-way, the existing center median would be widened from six to 18 feet. Although the median would be broken frequently for left turn lanes, it would permit installation of two alternating rows of trees, as shown in Figure 5-9. New, more appropriate street trees could also be planted on either side of the street within a widened sidewalk area. The rows of trees would create a special “gateway” on Fremont Boulevard. The three lanes of traffic in each direction would be maintained with outside lane widths narrowed from 20 feet to 12 feet. A bicycle lane would

also be included. On-street parking would not be allowed along Fremont Boulevard, in order to retain lane capacity and prevent parking impediments to traffic flows. Buildings would be built at the front property line along Fremont Boulevard in order to further define the street edge.

- “ **Paseo Padre Parkway.** Paseo Padre Parkway has an existing right-of-way of 128 feet, as shown in Figure 5-10. Paseo Padre Parkway could be modified to have character similar to that of the proposals for Fremont Boulevard. This would include a planted median, three lanes of traffic in each direction, bike lanes, street trees planted in landscape strips and widened sidewalks, as shown in Figure 5-11. The planting strips would serve as a buffer for pedestrians from the passing traffic. The addition of street trees would enhance the character of this major arterial, thereby marking the area as another special cross-city connection.

These new designs would require reconstruction of the curbs on both sidewalks and in the median of Fremont Boulevard and Paseo Padre Parkway. Since this would be costly, it may not be possible to undertake it immediately. If this is the case, it would be possible to effect intermediate changes on these streets by planting trees in the existing 6-foot median where it exists today. On-street parking would not be allowed along Paseo Padre Parkway, in order to retain lane capacity and prevent parking impediments to traffic flows. In the future, similar im-

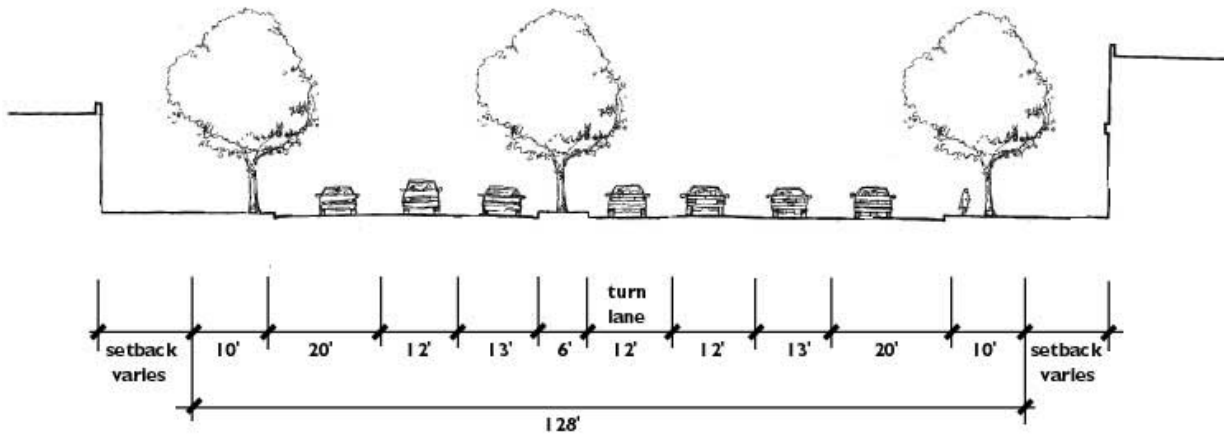


Figure 5-10. Paseo Padre Parkway Existing Condition

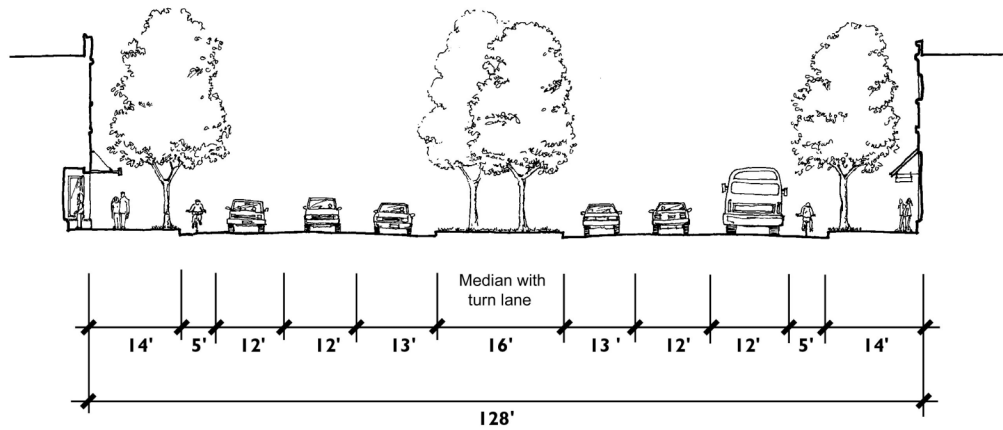


Figure 5-11. Potential Design for Paseo Padre Parkway

provements might also be proposed for Mowry Avenue and Stevenson Boulevard .

4. Parkway Collectors

Parkway collectors are lower volume streets that provide more local circulation than parkway arterials. The character of these streets is also intended to be

that of a lush greenway, but would be smaller in scale than parkway arterials. In the CBD, these streets would be Civic Center Drive and Walnut Avenue. These streets may have on-street parking if there is adequate width.

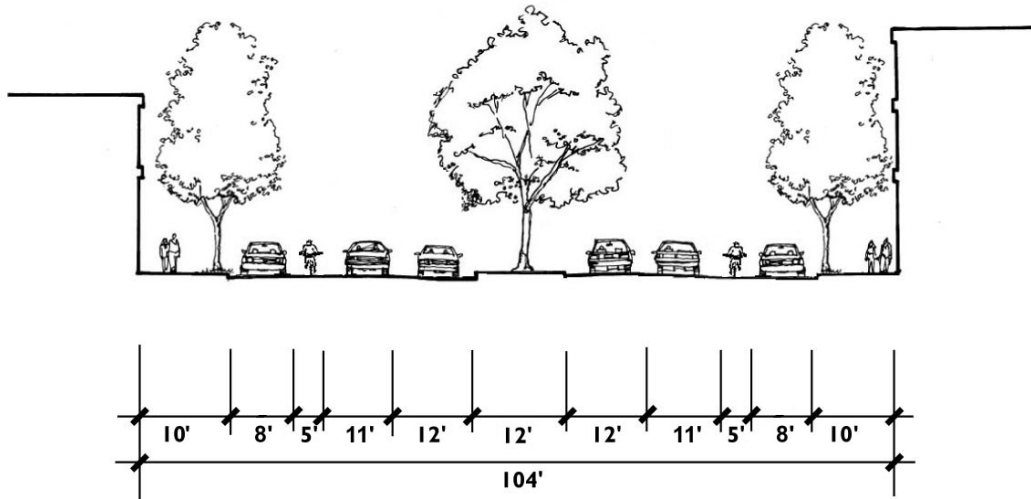


Figure 5-12. Potential Design for Civic Center Drive

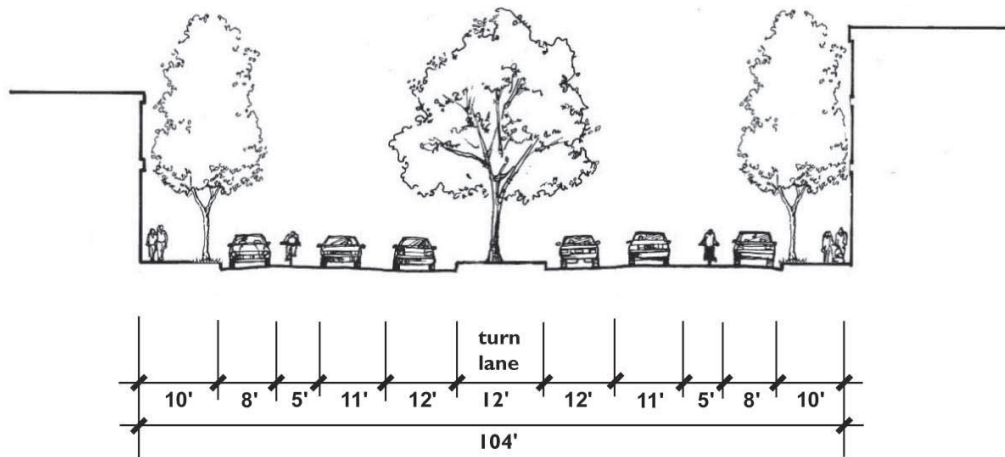


Figure 5-13. Potential Design for Walnut Avenue

- ◆ **Civic Center Drive.** Civic Center Drive provides a direct connection from the CBD to Central Park and Lake Elizabeth. This 450-acre regional park is a significant destination resource immediately adjacent to the CBD. Civic Center Drive has an existing right-of-way of 104 feet. This street is not a through-connector street

because it only runs between Mowry Avenue and the Park. Civic Center Drive could be reconfigured as shown in Figure 5-12.

- ◆ **Walnut Avenue.** Walnut Avenue could be designed as a parkway collector, similar in design to Civic Center Drive. Walnut Avenue, a 104-

foot right-of-way, would be designed to accommodate on-street parking and bike lanes, as well as two lanes of traffic in each direction. A planted center median, with landscaping and trees, would taper to accommodate dedicated left turn lanes at intersections. Street trees would be planted on both sides of the street and in the widened median. This significant landscaping would help visually narrow the right-of-way. Bicycle lanes would be an added amenity to the streetscape and could be accommodated by narrowing the existing traffic lanes as shown in Figure 5-13. Front property setbacks would be encouraged to abut the right-of-way, and six-story maximum height buildings would be permitted, which would also help to define the street.

5. New Local Roadways

The intent of local roadways is to enhance circulation, both pedestrian and vehicular, and to reduce city block size to a more walkable scale. Local roadways would be developed by property owners or by the City as the property is redeveloped, as described in Chapter 6.

The minimum allowable right-of-way width for a new local roadway is 48 feet. This 48-foot right-of-way allows for two twelve-foot sidewalks with columnar street trees, and two twelve-foot lanes for vehicular traffic, as shown in Figure 5-14. This clearance would provide adequate access for emergency and fire vehicles.

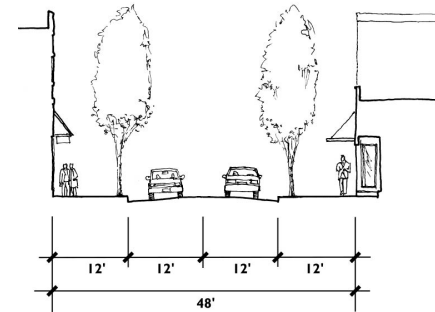


Figure 5-14. Local Roadway Minimum Street Section

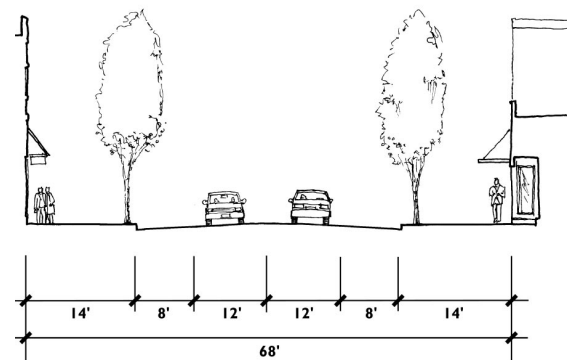


Figure 5-15. Local Roadway Preferred Street Section

A 68-foot right-of-way would be preferred for local roadways, because it would permit construction of wider sidewalks and allow for on-street parking. The street would accommodate two twelve foot lanes for traffic, two parking lanes, and two 14-foot sidewalks, as shown in Figure 5-15. This alternative would allow for more spacious pedestrian access. An illustration of a new local roadway is shown in Figure 5-16.



Figure 5-16. *Perspective View of New Local Roadway*

The 68-foot local roadway design would be required as a minimum standard for the BART Way extension. In the Office Center Subdistrict, an additional ten feet for two bike lanes should be included in order to provide for bicycle access to the BART station, as described in Section D, below. All other pedestrian-oriented local roadways would be required

to meet the 48-foot minimum standard, but the 68-foot standard is preferred.

6. *Pedestrian-Oriented Walkways*

Pedestrian-oriented walkways are intended to enhance pedestrian circulation and to help break down the existing “superblock” scale of the CBD in the

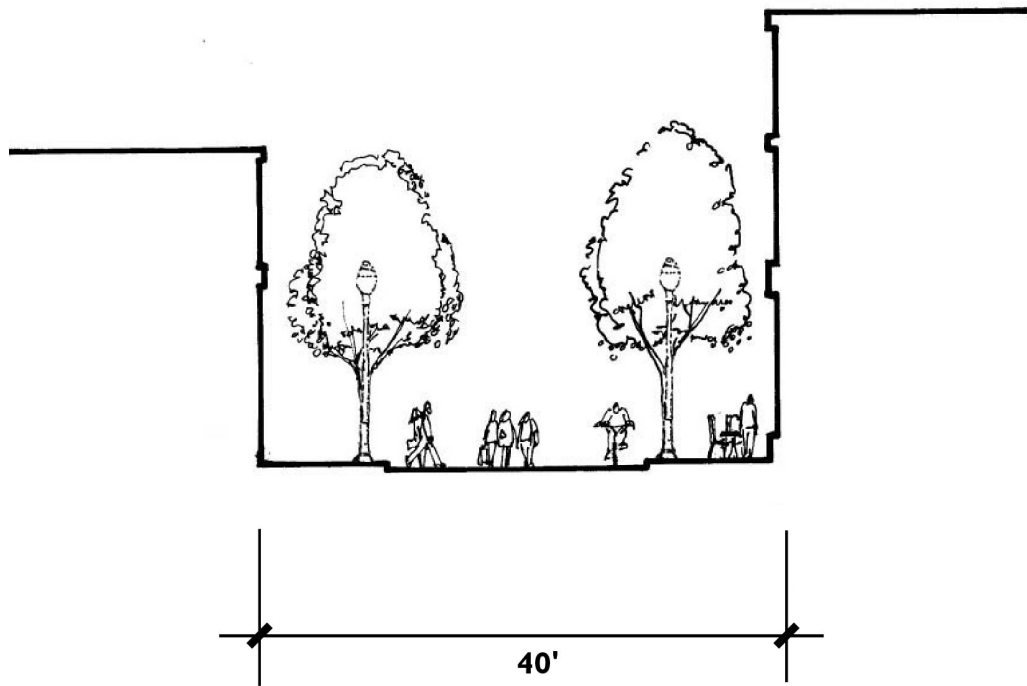


Figure 5-17. Pedestrian-Oriented Walkways Minimum Section

Focus Area. Walkways would be primarily mid-block passages that would provide access to parking facilities and other areas of the CBD, designed to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. The walkways would provide a significant component within the CBD's open space network. These dedicated pedestrian-oriented walkways would be developed as private properties are redeveloped.

Pedestrian-oriented walkways would be designed with a minimum of a 40-foot right-of-way. This

width would provide adequate space for outdoor seating, street trees, landscaping, special paving, public art displays and bicycle parking as shown in Figure 5-17, with an alternative design in Figure 5-18. This clearance could also provide access for medical and emergency vehicles, but would be designed to prohibit through-traffic. The walkways could provide limited access for delivery and service trucks for local businesses.

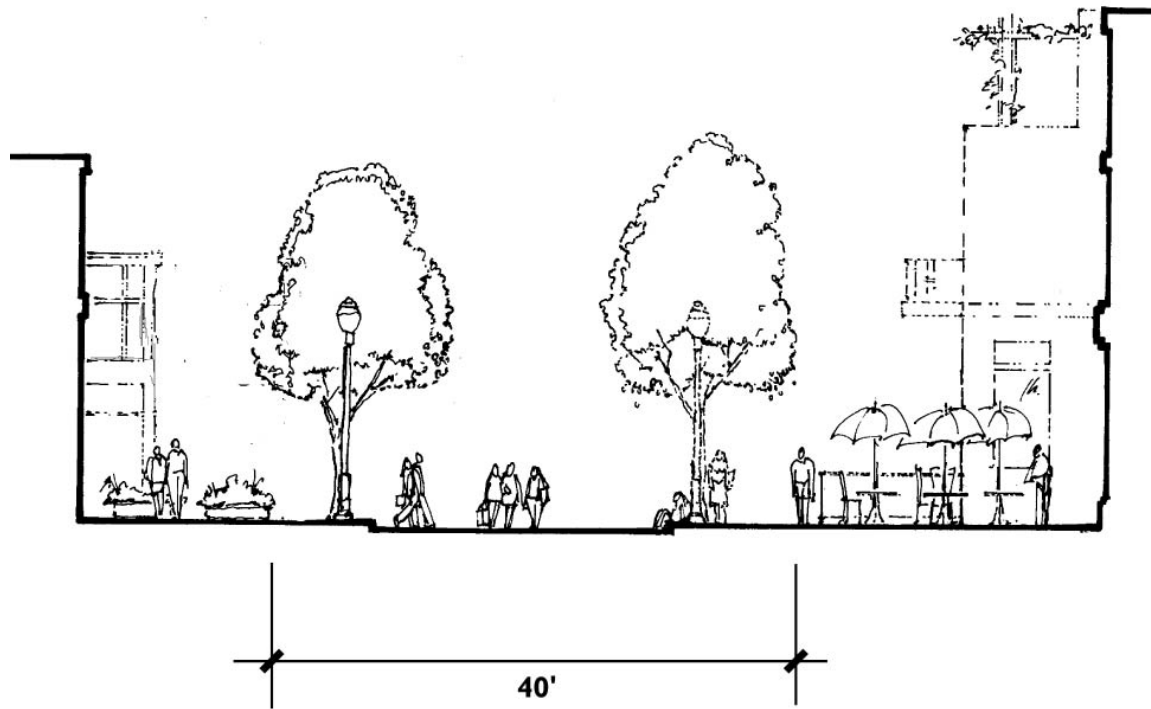


Figure 5-18. Pedestrian-Oriented Walkways With Building Setbacks

Adequate lighting of the pedestrian passages must be incorporated and maintained in order to provide for pedestrian safety. Surveillance from adjacent buildings and outdoor spaces will also help to increase pedestrian safety.

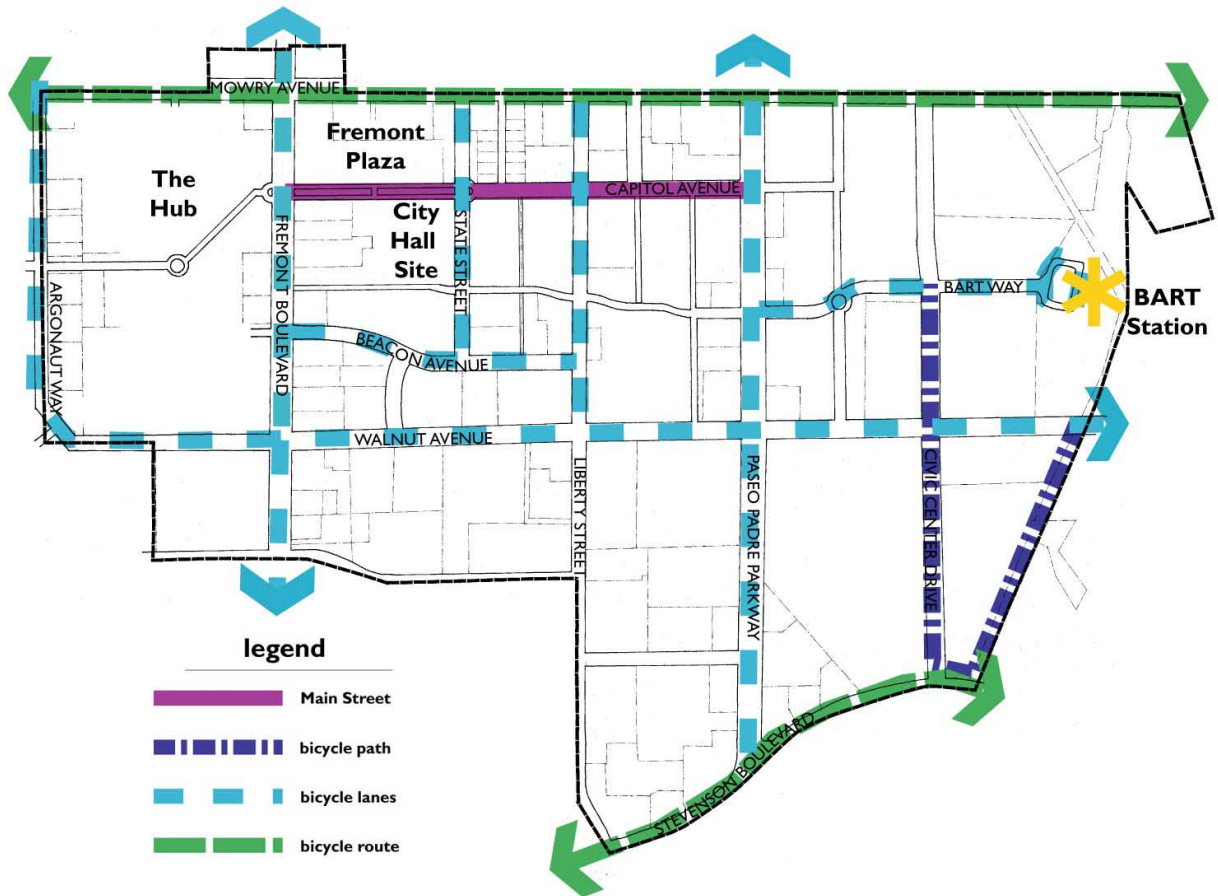


Figure 5-19. Proposed Bicycle Network

D. Bicycle Improvements

The existing bicycle lanes would remain on Walnut Avenue, which would tie into the existing route located on Fremont Boulevard. New bike lanes would be accommodated on Paseo Padre Parkway, which would continue the existing Paseo Padre bike lanes into the CBD. The BART Way extension would

also provide a bicycle connections to the BART station. Bicycle routes are shown in Figure 5-19. Signing for bicycle routes and lanes should be provided as part of the CBD signing program called for in Chapter 4.

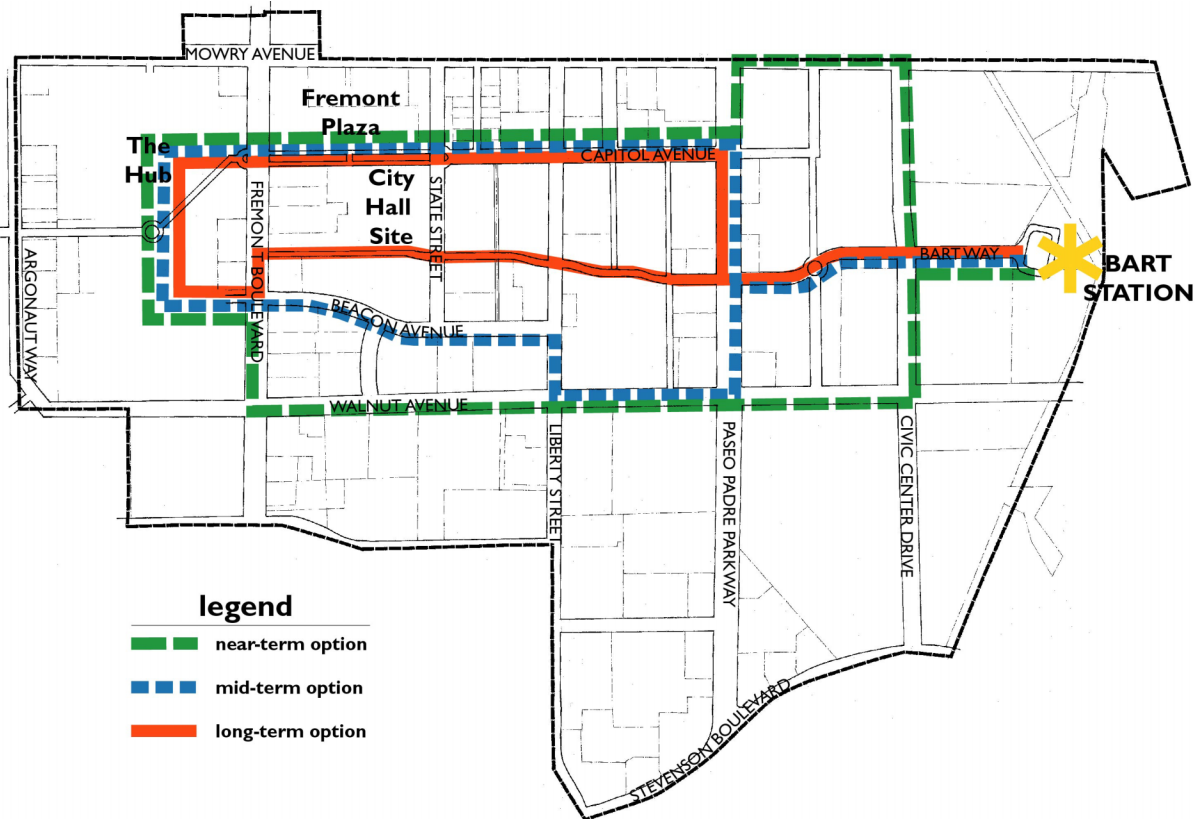


Figure 5-20. Potential Shuttle Routes

E. Shuttle

A shuttle system should be an integral part of the public transit system to help connect the different parts of the CBD with the BART station and other transit nodes. This plan incorporates three possible alternative routes that are illustrated in Figure 5-20. These routes would provide service to key destinations in the CBD, including the Focus Area

and the Fremont Hub shopping center. The exact selection of the appropriate shuttle route will depend on the implementation of new streets in the CBD. The City should investigate implementation of the shuttle in the short-term. Near-term and likely mid- and long-term options are indicated in Figure 5-20.



Figure 5-21. Potential Parking Structure Locations and Access Strategies

F. Parking

Parking in the CBD would be provided by private property owners and through shared parking facilities, which could include City participation. As more intensive development occurs in the CBD, parking will increasingly be supplied in parking structures. Potential locations for 13 separate parking structures north of Walnut are shown in Figure 5-21, although they could be built in many other possible locations. While there are no specific designs for these parking structures, their approximate sizes and locations

have been suggested as one possible way to accommodate the development foreseen under this Concept Plan.

1. Focus Area Parking District

Parking would be provided in the Focus Area through shared parking, surface parking, and private parking. Property owners would provide some parking on their sites in either surface or structured parking lots. Figure 5-21 shows seven possible locations for private or shared parking structures in

the Focus Area. These structures would provide about 5,300 parking spaces, assuming parking structures with four or five levels (three or four stories). Based on current City standards of three parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of office development, this would serve approximately 1.7 million square feet of development, close to the projected development of 1.97 million square feet shown for the Focus Area in Table 4-1 (page 45). The remaining square footage in the Focus Area could be served with pockets of surface parking.

An assessment district may be formed in the Focus Area that would help to fund, maintain and operate shared parking facilities. Property owners in the Focus Area could participate in the assessment district, and would be entitled to contribute and use shared parking facilities strategically located in the Focus Area. The formation of an assessment district will be studied further by the City, as called for in Chapter 8.

2. *Other Subdistrict Parking Provision*

Parking in other subdistricts would be provided on a site-specific basis by private property owners or as part of shared parking facilities similar to that suggested for the Focus Area. In the Office Center parking could be supplied in shared or private stand-alone structures, and in structured parking integrated into office towers. Near BART, new development should be encouraged to coordinate shared parking facilities with BART, particularly if joint development ventures are undertaken in this area and shared parking does not compromise BART's parking needs. In the long term, should the Hub redevelop,

parking would increasingly be supplied through parking structures. The existing surface parking lots would continue to serve development as intensification at the Hub occurs. Parking for any residential components of mixed-use projects would generally be provided on-site in "parking podiums" built on the ground level of a project site. In the South of Walnut area, parking will probably continue to be on-site in surface lots until land values and development intensities warrant parking structures.

3. *Parking Location and Access Strategies*

Parking in all districts must be strategically located to encourage access to facilities from local and collector streets. Parking access would occur primarily from non-"Key Streets" (described in Chapter 6) such as the local roadways, the BART Way cross street, Liberty Street, and Beacon and Walnut Avenues, as illustrated in Figure 5-21.

Additionally, parking facilities should be conveniently located within walking distance of the shuttle route and main street destinations, and proximate to pedestrian walkways.

Parking is required to be located behind or next-to buildings in the pedestrian-oriented districts, as described in Chapter 7.

4. *Parking Requirements*

Parking requirements would be established on a use-specific basis, with preferences given for retail type uses, as described in Chapter 6. Parking requirements would be met through on-site provision in surface lots or structures, or through in-lieu fees contributed to shared parking facilities. Reductions in

parking requirements may be granted for projects that provide parking in structures or underground facilities or are located within 1/2-mile of the Fremont BART Station. These reductions are also described in Chapter 6.

G. CBD Transit Access

Improved transit connections to the CBD should be provided. The City should work with AC Transit to create new destination routes to the CBD, with frequent buses along the routes, in order to increase transit access to the CBD from the nearby historic commercial districts of Niles, Centerville and Irvington.

6 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This chapter contains a review of the current zoning in order to set the context for evaluating implementation methods to achieve the land use proposals presented in the Fremont CBD Concept Plan. It then outlines regulatory concepts for the CBD. The third section of the chapter outlines specific incentives and regulations and new regulatory framework for CBD zoning that will be used to implement the concepts contained in the Plan.

A. Existing Regulatory Conditions

In proposing implementation approaches for the Fremont CBD Concept, it is important to first consider the existing CBD zoning to determine what changes, if any, are required of the use regulations and development standards. Currently, the entire CBD has a single General Plan land use designation of Central Business District (CBD). The stated purpose of the CBD is to provide for a concentration of retail, service, and office activities useful to both local and regional residents.

1. Existing Regulations

A generous mix of permitted, zoning administrator and conditional uses is allowed in the CBD, including offices, radio and television stations, retail trade, transportation, and accessory uses.

Development regulations in the CBD are relatively permissive and include zero-foot side and rear yard setbacks, and no limits on building height. The existing 0.5 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is a low FAR for a typical CBD or downtown. Small traditional down-

towns with buildings of one to three stories tall typically have FARs of 1.0 to 2.0. FARs could go from 2.0 to 4.0 in a downtown that is consistently developed with three to six story buildings.

All projects proposed in the CBD must currently undergo a review by the Planning Commission for site planning and architectural approval. The site plan and architectural review process is undertaken due to the importance of the CBD to the City and because of the lack of clear building design guidelines.

2. Implications of Existing Regulations

The existing zoning regulations are not geared to specifically address the direction in the General Plan for development in the CBD, particularly in the following ways:

- ◆ **No Differentiation of Subareas.** There are no special regulations to foster specific development types in specific subareas, such as the Focus Area, the Office Tower Area, or the Hub.
- ◆ **Floor Area Ratio Limitations.** The maximum floor area ratio (FAR) limitations would preclude the type of intensive development foreseen for some of the subareas in the Concept Plan.
- ◆ **Building Design Regulations.** The current regulations do not assist the development community in understanding the expectations of the City, thereby increasing uncertainty in the development application process. Development of a set of clear developer incentives and regu-

lations will streamline the project approval process for developers and City staff.

- ◆ **Site Plan and Architectural Review by Planning Commission.** As described previously, all projects proposed in the CBD must currently undergo a review by the Planning Commission for site planning and architectural issues. The site plan and architectural review process is undertaken due to the importance of the CBD to the City and because of the lack of clear building design guidelines.
- ◆ **Residential Mixed-Use Development Restrictions.** Provisions in the current CBD zoning limit mixed-use development that meets current market needs and responds to the design concepts presented for the CBD. These provisions include requirements that mixed-use housing projects be located at the periphery of the CBD, that the primary use be at least 51% commercial or retail, that housing for low-income households be incorporated, and that mixed-use projects must file a Planned District application.

B. Implementation Concepts

The implementation of the Concept Plan will be driven by market forces and a combination of incentives, regulations and design guidelines. This section presents the overall concepts that could be used to implement the Concept Plan. These concepts are detailed by use and subdistrict in Section C, be-

low. These concepts will be studied further as implementation occurs over time.

In order to understand the FAR incentives proposed, several definitions are included below for reference:

- ◆ **Floor Area Ratio:** FAR is the ratio of gross building area to gross lot area.
- ◆ **Base FAR:** The “Base FAR” for a parcel is the FAR allowed by regulation, which specifies the building square footage that may be built on a given parcel as of right.
- ◆ **Bonus FAR:** An “FAR Bonus” is additional building square footage that would be permitted, in addition to the square footage allowed by the Base FAR for a parcel, based on compliance with certain stated criteria.

1. Subdistricts

The CBD would be divided into a series of subdistricts, each with its own purpose in expressing the CBD Concept. This approach will allow the City to regulate land uses, building design and form in specific portions of the CBD.

2. Incentives

Incentives will be an integral component of the implementation of the Concept Plan. Incentives are intended to attract developer interest, ensure that both the development community and the City benefit from a streamlined approvals process, and help to create amenities needed to make the CBD successful. Floor Area Ratio (FAR) bonuses, FAR transfers, and parking reduction incentives will be offered

to those projects that make specific contributions toward the implementation of the CBD Concept Plan.

The following incentives are generally described below, but many of the details of each incentive must still be determined through further analysis.

- ◆ **FAR and Square Footage Bonuses.** Bonuses could be granted for development of plazas and open spaces, for construction of structured and underground parking and for energy and resource efficiency. Bonuses may be usable on-site or could be transferred to other property owners in the CBD.
- ◆ **Base and Bonus FAR Transfers.** Both base and bonus FARs could be transferred to other properties in the CBD. Base FAR transfers may be permitted for view corridor preservation and pedestrian and roadway dedications. Bonus transfers will be permitted for any project eligible for an FAR bonus. A deed restriction would be recorded for property from which floor area is transferred, restricting the FAR to the residual left after the transfer.
- ◆ **“Premier Use” Benefits.** Certain types of development, such as hotels, theaters, art galleries, cultural arts facilities and pedestrian-oriented retail and restaurants on Key Streets (described below), may be entitled to exemptions from specific parking and FAR calculations if they meet CBD design principles.
- ◆ **Permit Streamlining through Development Organization (DO) Review.** New development projects consistent with the regulations and design guidelines described in Chapter 7 could be granted Development Organization (staff level) review, which will reduce application processing times and thereby facilitate developer efforts. The proposed CBD review process is illustrated in Figure 6-1.
- ◆ **Parking Requirement Adjustments and Waivers.** Parking exemptions, parking standard reductions or assessment district fee deferral may be granted for projects in pedestrian-oriented areas or that incorporate structured and/or underground parking or have street-facing retail. A special assessment district may be considered as a means of providing parking in the CBD, for which fees might be charged.
- ◆ **Plazas and Open Space.** Open space that meets this Plan’s design guidelines regarding location and design may earn a square footage bonus usable on-site or transferable to another property owner within the CBD. Privately-developed open spaces consistent with those illustrated in Figure 4-16 may be entitled to a greater FAR bonus, as an incentive to encourage open space development consistent with the Plan.

Additionally, impact fees could be reduced for the first high quality white tablecloth restaurant on Capitol Avenue.

CBD Project Review Process

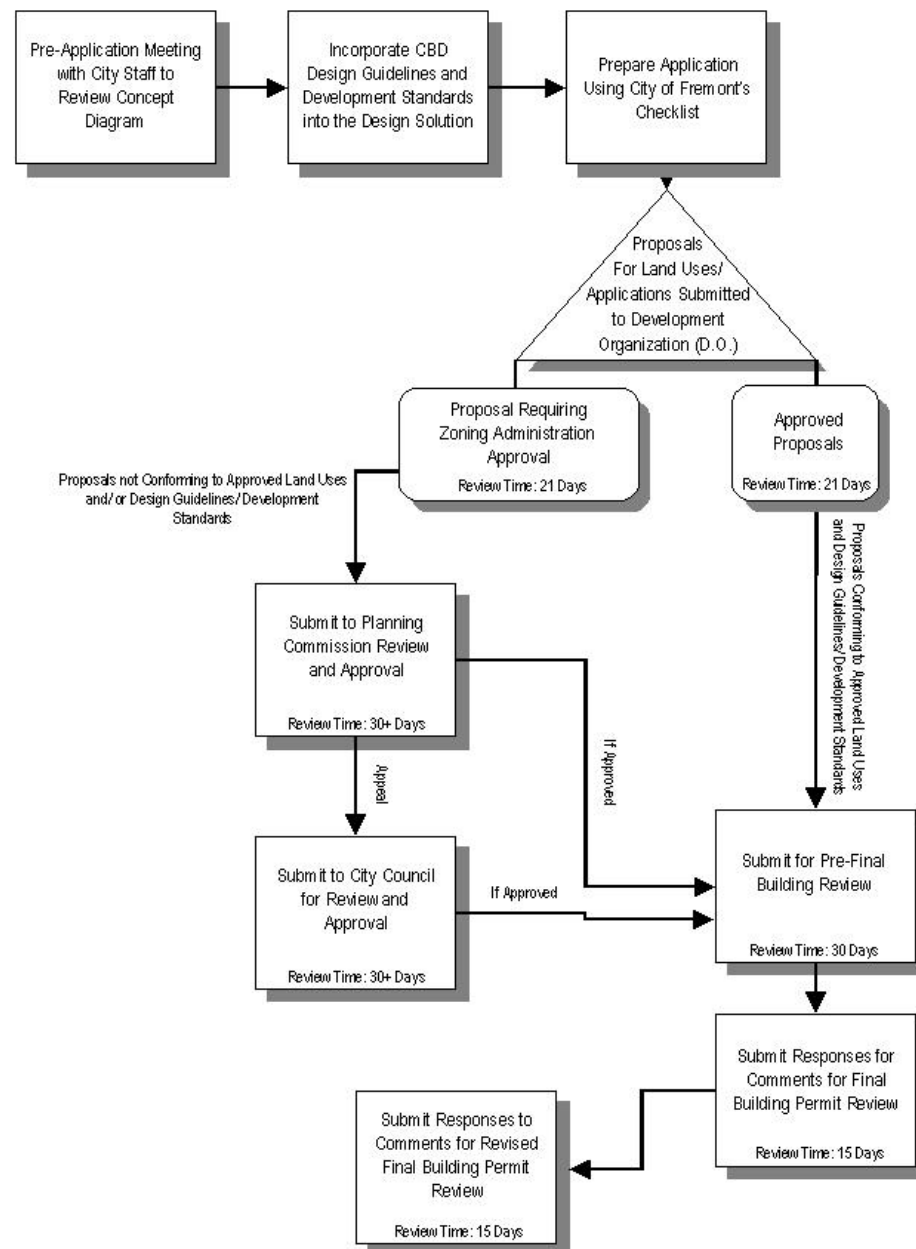


Figure 6-1. Proposed CBD Review Process

- ◆ **Energy Efficient and Green Construction Building Practices.** Standards for energy efficiency and green buildings should be adopted citywide. Buildings exceeding those standards in the CBD could earn an FAR bonus usable on-site or transferable to another property owner.

3. *Regulations*

Regulations will be used to guide uses, building massing and other important features in the CBD.

The regulations for the CBD Concept Plan are described below:

- ◆ **Use Regulations.** Land uses will be focused and emphasized in specific subdistricts.
- ◆ **Building Heights.** Maximum and minimum building heights shown in the plan are preferred building heights. Other building heights may be considered depending on the degree to which they meet the overall goals and objectives of the Plan.
- ◆ **View Corridors.** View corridor preservation will be implemented through stepbacks above a fixed height. While large stepbacks along Capitol Avenue are preferred, lesser stepbacks will be considered so long as the overall intent of the Plan to preserve a view corridor and a retail-oriented pedestrian scale is maintained. Transfer of base FAR maybe permitted. Pedestrian bridges would not be permitted in the view corridors.

- ◆ **Pedestrian-Oriented Design.** Pedestrian-oriented design, such as build-to lines and retail-type frontage on ground floors, will be required in specific subdistricts, including the Focus Area, Office Center and Hub Area. In other subdistricts, projects that voluntarily meet pedestrian-oriented design guidelines may qualify for Development Organization (DO) Review.

- ◆ **Capitol Avenue Build-To Lines.** Property owners will be required to build to the Capitol Avenue right-of-way edge, in order to maintain a consistent street edge.

4. *Planned District Process*

If an owner or developer wishes to propose a project that does not meet these guidelines or regulations, an application under the City's Planned District process could be submitted. This process provides a means to achieve desirable development featuring variations in uses and site development standards. All Planned District applications require Planning Commission and City Council approval, and must include findings that exceptions to regulations provide extraordinary benefits and are warranted in terms of the total proposed development.

C. Specific Incentives and Regulations

This section includes the specific incentives and regulations to be applied in the CBD to implement the concepts outlined in Section B, above. It includes five key components:

- ◆ Subdistrict Land Use
- ◆ Subdistrict Building Design and Intensity
- ◆ Housing Regulations
- ◆ Parking Regulations
- ◆ Roadway and Walkway Dedication

1. Subdistrict Land Use

In the CBD, land uses would be emphasized by specific subdistrict as indicated below:

Subdistrict 1: Retail, Commercial and Residential Uses

Subdistricts 2a & 2b: Retail, Commercial, Cultural and Limited Residential

Subdistrict 3: High Intensity Office

Subdistrict 4: Hospital and Ancillary Uses

Subdistrict 5: Office and Other Uses

Figure 6-2 shows the subdistrict boundaries.

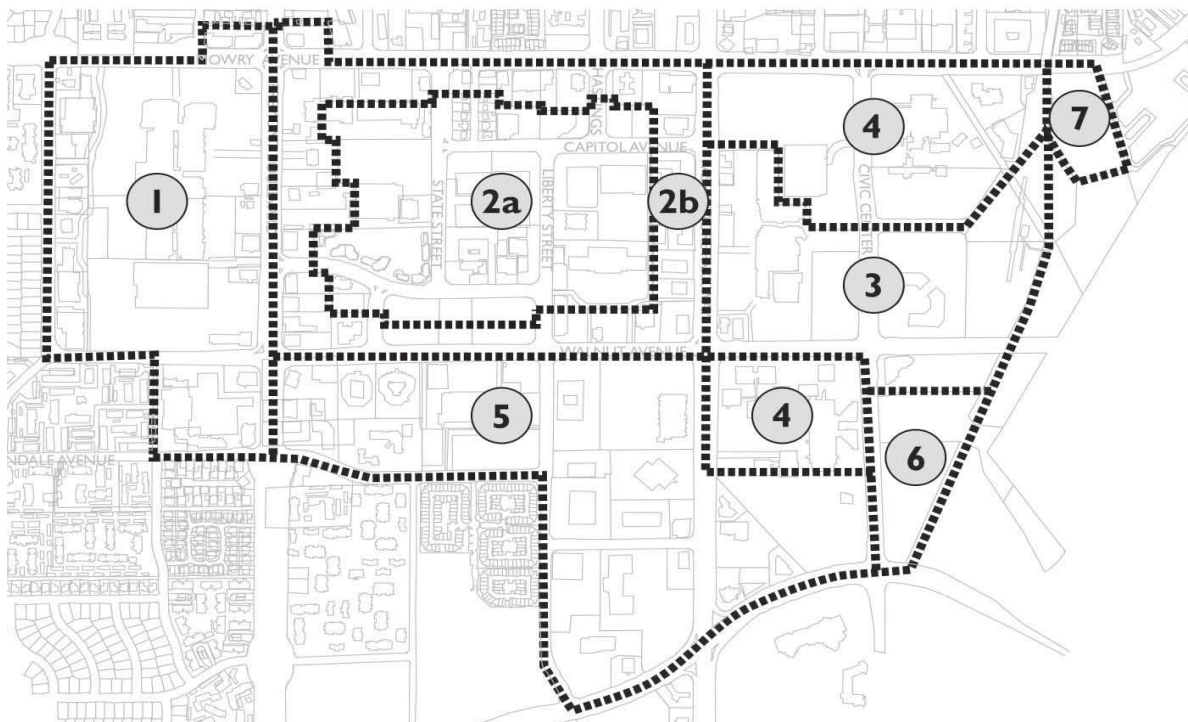


Figure 6-2. Subdistricts

Subdistrict 6: Mixed-Use Residential/
Retail/Office

Subdistrict 7: Residential and Mixed-
Commercial Uses

Existing uses in subdistricts that are nonconforming with the subdistrict concept would be allowed to continue in the subdistrict.

As described in Chapter 4, high density housing in subareas 2a and 2b would be allowed as part of a mixed-use project in the area shown in Figure 6-3. Mixed use housing could be allowed elsewhere in the focus area depending on the degree to which it contributed to the commercial/retail vitality of the area and included a significant commercial component.

To the degree housing is permitted in any of the subareas, it will need to contribute towards meeting the needs of the City's low and moderate income households, either by providing such housing as part of the project or by contributing to meeting those housing needs in some other fashion. Further analysis is needed to determine the appropriate mix between commercial uses and residential uses in a mixed-use project and to determine any minimum affordability requirements.

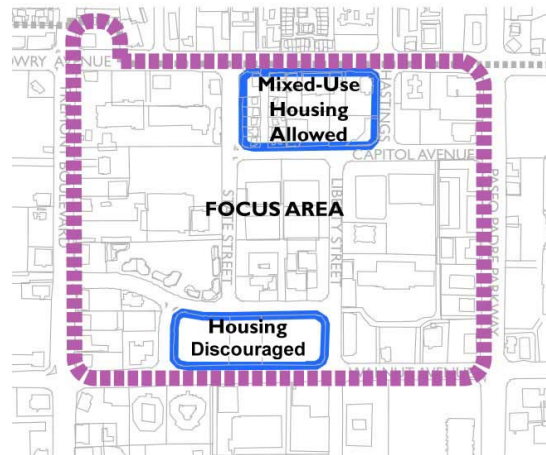


Figure 6-3. Areas for Mixed-Use Housing in the Focus Area

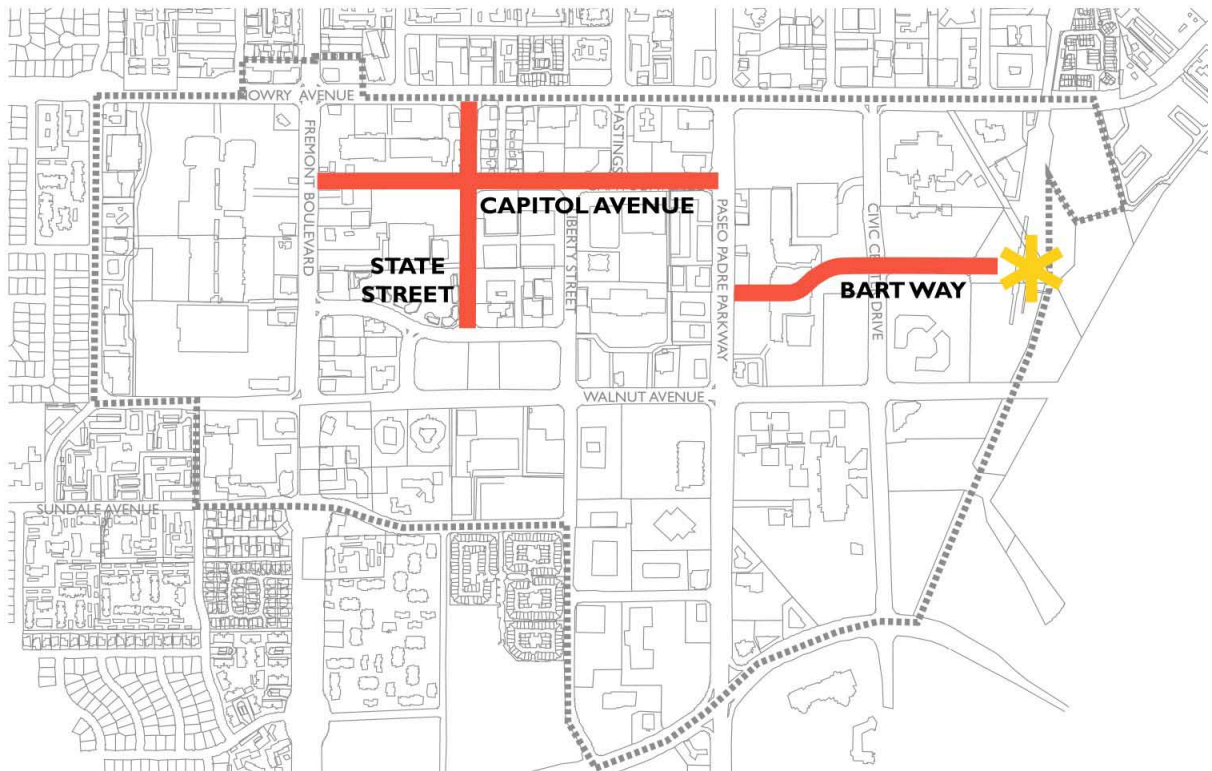


Figure 6-4. Key Streets

Several additional concepts for subdistrict land use limitations are described below:

- ◆ **Key Streets.** Retail, entertainment or restaurant uses are encouraged on the ground floors of buildings facing Key Streets, which are shown in Figure 6-4. Incentives for these uses would include reduced parking requirements and exemptions from FAR calculations. Other uses would be permitted on ground floors in buildings meeting the pedestrian-oriented design guidelines described in Chapter 7.
- ◆ **Medical Uses.** Medical uses would be allowed throughout the CBD, including ground floor locations, provided they meet pedestrian-oriented design guidelines. They would be particularly encouraged in Subdistrict 4.
- ◆ **Uses Limited to Upper Floors.** In specific subdistricts, some uses would be restricted to upper floors, such as in the Hub and Focus Areas (Subdistricts 1, 2a and 2b), where office and residential uses would be allowed as upper floor uses only.

◆ **Prohibitions on Drive-Through Facilities.** Drive-through facilities would be prohibited in the CBD.

◆ **Small-Scale Retail Uses South of Walnut.** In the South of Walnut Area, only small-scale retail uses under 10,000 square feet would be allowed, in order to focus retail development in other subdistricts.

2. *Subdistrict Building Design and Intensity*

Development intensities would be emphasized by specific subdistrict as indicated below:

Subdistricts 1, 2a, 4 & 7: 2 to 4 story building, mid-intensity development, except for retail-only buildings as noted below.

Subdistrict 2b: 2 to 6 story buildings, high-intensity development.

Subdistricts 3 & 4: 4 to 12 story buildings, highest intensity development

Subdistrict 5: 1 to 6 story buildings. Buildings taller than 6 stories shall have step-backs from the edge of the street right-of-way (back of sidewalk) in upper stories (usually above two stories) to minimize any possible "canyon" effect, preserve view corridors and encourage a more pedestrian-friendly environment..

Several additional concepts for subdistrict building design and intensity are described below:

◆ **Public Buildings Exempt.** The new City Hall and Cultural Arts Center public buildings would be exempt from all building design and intensity requirements.

◆ **Buildings With Retail Uses.** Buildings with 100 percent retail use could be one-story buildings, and would be exempt from the two-story minimum as long as they are consistent with the design guidelines in Subdistricts 1, 2a, 4 and 7.

◆ **Tower Stepbacks Required.** All buildings adjacent to identified view corridors should be stepped back from the street above 2 stories for 30 feet from the property line, in order to accommodate view corridor preservation, provision of pedestrian-oriented uses, internal parking systems and to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

◆ **Minimum Landscaping Requirements.** Minimum landscaping requirements could be established in all subdistricts. These landscaping requirements should be appropriate for the nature of each subdistrict. For example, there would be no landscaping between buildings and the sidewalks in Subdistrict 2, where buildings would be built to the property line, but there would be such landscaping in other subdistricts.

Appropriate base, bonus and maximum FARs, square footage bonuses and minimum landscaping requirements must be determined by the City through separate study in order to implement the

Plan. These are included in Chapter 8 as implementation items for the Concept Plan.

3. *Housing Regulations*

Residential uses would be limited to specific subdistricts and areas in the CBD, as described above and in Chapter 4. The following additional conditions would be placed on any housing development in the CBD:

- ◆ **Planned District Application.** All projects proposed in the CBD that include housing components will be subject to a Planned District (PD) review.
- ◆ **Allowed Density.** Housing would only be permitted in the CBD if it met minimum density requirements. Minimum densities for the CBD should be 50 dwelling units to the acre.
- ◆ **Mixed-Use Development.** In most subdistricts, housing would only be permitted as a part of mixed-use development projects. Wholly residential projects would only be allowed in Subdistrict 7, on the east side of the BART tracks. The percentage of mix would be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Planning Commission and City Council through the PD process.
- ◆ **Minimum Parcel Size.** Housing development would only be permitted on parcels meeting minimum size requirements. The City will evaluate the appropriate minimum parcel size requirement. This item also requires further study on the part of the City.

4. *Parking Regulations*

Parking requirements for new development will be tied to both location in a subdistrict and use. Parking standards will be lower in Subdistricts 1, 2a, 2b, 6 and 7 for upper floor and office uses than in Subdistricts 3, 4 and 5. Retail-only projects will be required to meet a higher parking standard than retail uses in mixed-use buildings.

Parking exemptions and per square foot parking reductions (number of spaces per square foot of development) could be granted under the following circumstances:

- ◆ **Parking Reductions for Structured and Underground Parking.** Parking reductions for structured and underground parking could be granted. These reductions would not be permitted for residential uses. The City will determine parking requirements and specific reductions through further study.
- ◆ **Complementary Uses.** Different uses have different parking characteristics which can be complementary. For example, peak demand for residential parking is in the evening, opposite the peak demand for office uses. Sharing parking facilities between complementary uses can reduce the overall amount of parking required to meet needs thereby making more efficient use of land and parking resources. A reduction in parking requirements should therefore be considered for joint use of parking facilities by complementary uses.

- ◆ **Capitol Avenue Retail.** The first retail uses on Capitol Avenue, up to a total of 10,000 square feet, could be exempt from all parking requirements. Only 2,500 square feet of retail space per development project should be granted the exemption. Building design guidelines described in Chapter 7 should be met in order to qualify for the exemption from parking requirements.
- ◆ **Near-Term Parking.** All other retail uses in the Focus Area could be exempt from up to 50 percent of their parking requirements for 3 years, during which period they would be entitled to use temporary shared parking facilities on the City Hall site, as described below. After that time, retail projects could provide parking through an in-lieu fee program, which would help to enable the creation of shared parking facilities.
- ◆ **In-Lieu Fees.** Payment of in-lieu fees instead of on-site parking provision could be permitted for up to 50% of required parking in Sub-districts 2 and 3 only.
- ◆ **Reduced Parking Requirements within One Half Mile of BART.** Reduced parking may be allowed within 1/2-mile of the Fremont BART station.
- ◆ **Temporary Shared Parking Facilities.** The City should explore the creation of temporary, shared parking facilities on a portion or all of the City Hall site. At such time as the City Hall

is developed, public parking facilities could be incorporated into the City Hall parking structure.

5. *Roadway and Walkway Development Requirements*

As described in Chapter 5, additional streets and roadways are needed in the CBD to break down the existing block sizes. Three possible alternative approaches to creation of new roadways were identified by the DPAC:

- ◆ **Private Development and Subsequent Dedication.** Under this model, pedestrian walkways and new roadways shown in the Concept Plan could be developed as a condition of approval for new development on the affected sites. New streets and walkways could then be dedicated to the City, also as a condition of project approval. The underlying lot area of the entire parcel could be used to calculate the base allowed FAR, which could be used on-site or transferred to another parcel within the CBD.
- ◆ **FAR Bonuses.** In this model, FAR bonuses could be granted to property owners willing to provide the roadways on a voluntary basis.
- ◆ **City Acquisition.** The City could acquire the new streets through voluntary sale by owners or the use of eminent domain. Under this approach, FAR would be calculated after the lot area was reduced to account for the right-of-way purchase.

The City should study these possibilities further during the Concept Plan implementation phase to decide which one(s) to use in the CBD. In general, these streets would be city-owned, although private ownership of new streets may be feasible in special circumstances.

7 BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

This chapter contains the building design guidelines for new development in the CBD. The design guidelines will be implemented to create more pedestrian-oriented development in the CBD.

A. Conformance to the Guidelines

Conformance requirements to the design guidelines for new and existing development are described below. In assessing compliance with the design guidelines, the Development Organization review process will also address conformance with subdistrict regulations in Chapter 6 of this Plan and city-wide design and building standards in other documents.

The Guidelines must be implemented through modifications to the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate reference to them. Until formal adoption, staff will use the guidelines in evaluating all proposals for development in the CBD. Once adopted, projects that are designed in substantial conformance with the guidelines and other City regulations may qualify for processing solely through the Development Organization as described in Figure 6-1. The Zoning Administrator may opt to refer any project to the Planning Commission for site plan and architectural review or a project may be required to apply for a planned district, as described below by subdistrict. Any development project referred to the Planning Commission may be appealed to the City Council after Planning Commission action. Staff may also, at its discretion, choose to refer a project to the City

Council for early conceptual review and comment, prior to action by the Planning Commission.

1. *New Development*

Conformance with these guidelines will generally be required in Subdistricts 1 through 3 for new development projects. Projects in Subareas 1 through 3 which are determined by the Zoning Administrator to be substantially in compliance but where there are some questions or concerns may be referred to the Planning Commission for site plan and architectural approval. Projects in Subdistricts 1 through 3 which are determined by the Zoning Administrator to be substantially out of compliance will be required to be processed as planned districts.

Conformance with these guidelines would be voluntary in Subdistricts 4 through 7. Projects in Subdistricts 4 through 7 which are in substantial conformance with the Guidelines may qualify for staff level Development Organization review and approval.

Existing buildings are not necessarily required to conform to all design guidelines in any area. However, especially in Subdistricts 1 through 3, any proposed additions should be designed to bring buildings closer to conformance with the intent of the Guidelines, wherever feasible.

In Subdistricts 1 through 3, whenever building expansions would substantially interfere with achieving the intent of the Guidelines (e.g. an addition that

included blank walls on pedestrian street frontages), it will be referred to the Planning Commission.

B. Definitions

The building design guidelines contain language that reflects the following principles:

- ◆ “**Shall**” or “**Must**” means that buildings in Subdistricts 1 through 3 must conform to the guideline described or must be processed as a Planned District. In Subdistricts 4 through 7, conformance is required to qualify for DO review.
- ◆ “**Should**” and “**Highly Encouraged**” means that conformance to the guideline is preferred, that conformance will be strongly encouraged by the City through the review process, and that the guideline is intended to be a recommendation to a developer about how to meet the design goals of the Concept Plan.

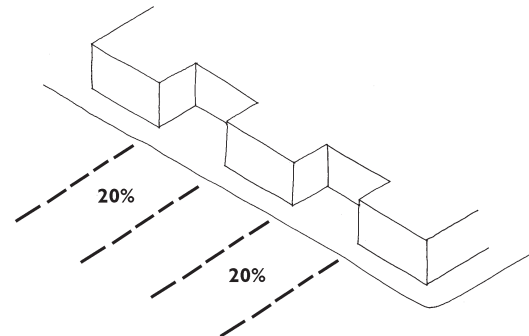
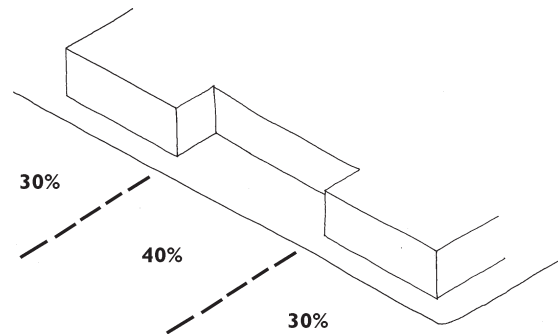
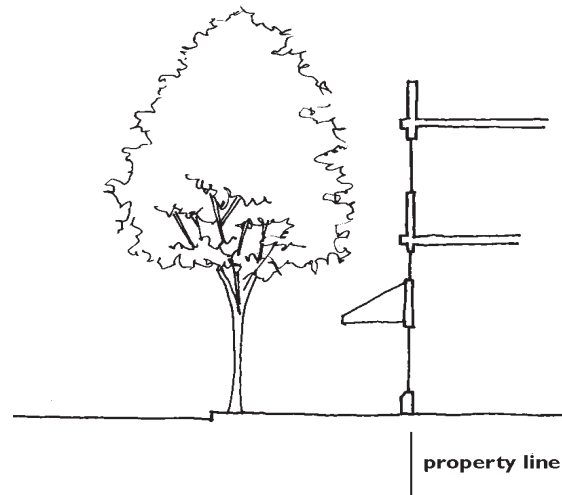
C. CBD Building Design Guidelines

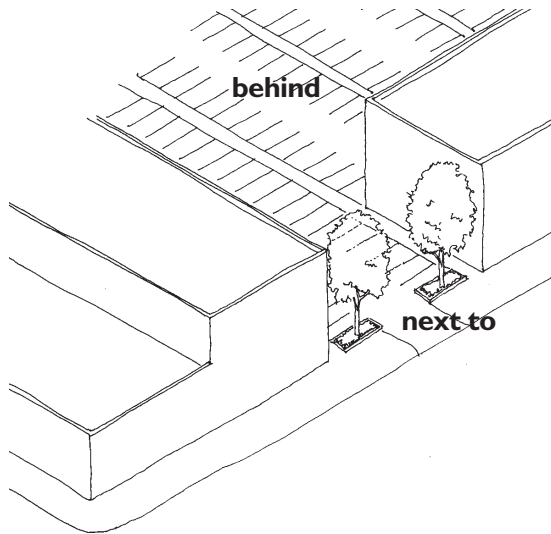
This section contains the building design guidelines and accompanying illustrations.

1. *Build-To Lines*

At least 60% of the fronts of buildings, for the first two stories of two to four story buildings, shall be built to the property line.

Up to a maximum of 40% may be set back, but only as a means to create plazas, open spaces or seating areas. Setbacks shall not be permitted at street corners or pedestrian walkway / street intersections.

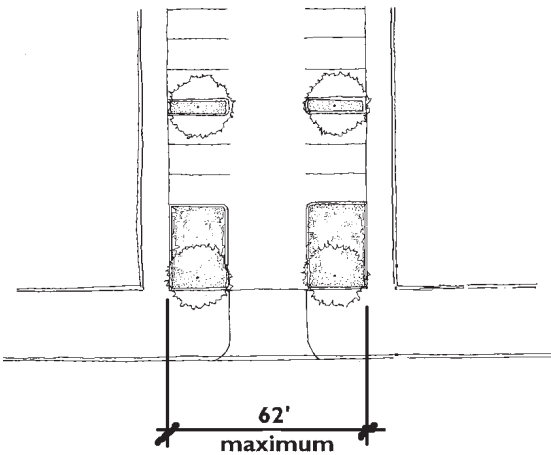
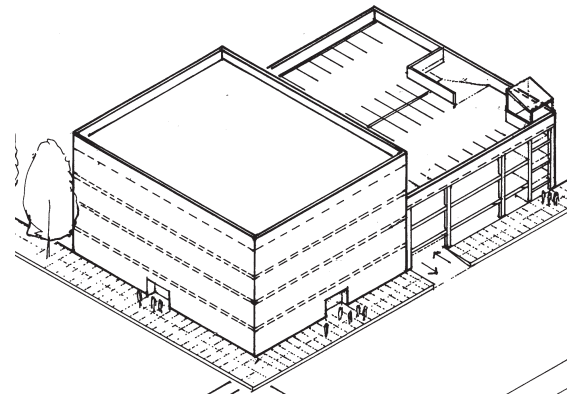




2. *Parking Design*

a. **Location:**

Parking shall be located behind buildings or next to buildings, whether in parking structures or surface lots.

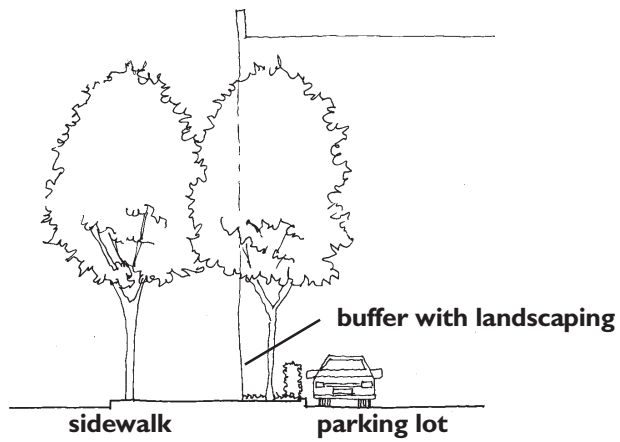
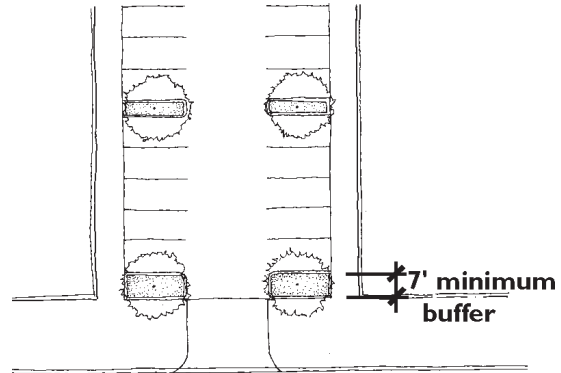


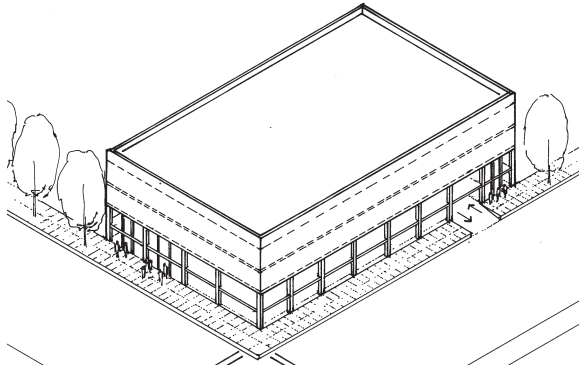
b. **Maximum Width:**

Surface parking areas next to buildings shall be no more than 62 feet wide. Parking areas must be buffered from street frontage as described below.

c. Buffer:

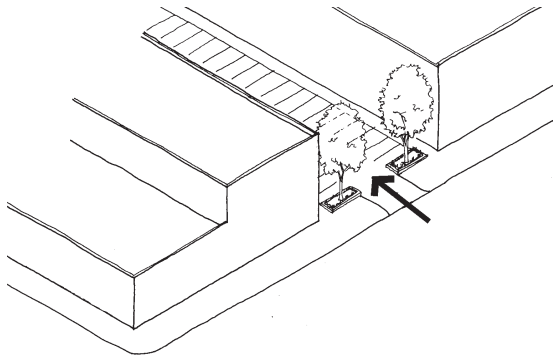
If surface parking faces any street frontage, a landscape buffer must be provided, and shall be a minimum of seven feet wide.





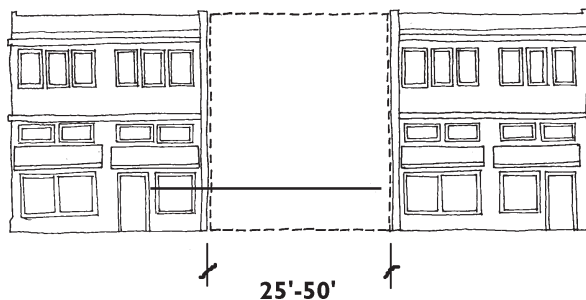
d. Building:

If structured parking faces any street frontage, the building shall be articulated to be consistent with other pedestrian-oriented design guidelines.



e. Access:

Vehicular access to parking should not occur from Key Streets, but should occur from non-key streets. State Street access is preferred over Capitol Avenue access. To the degree feasible, the number of driveways from key pedestrian streets should be minimized and joint access strongly encouraged.



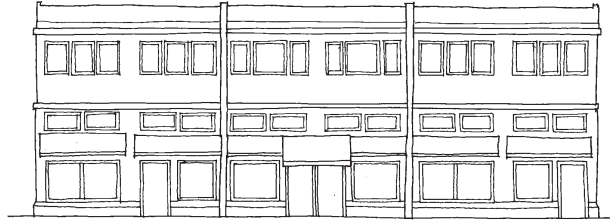
3. Building Rhythm

Buildings should be articulated to reflect a small-scale street frontage rhythm of approximately 25 to 50 feet.

4. *Retail-Type Frontages*

a. **Store Fronts:**

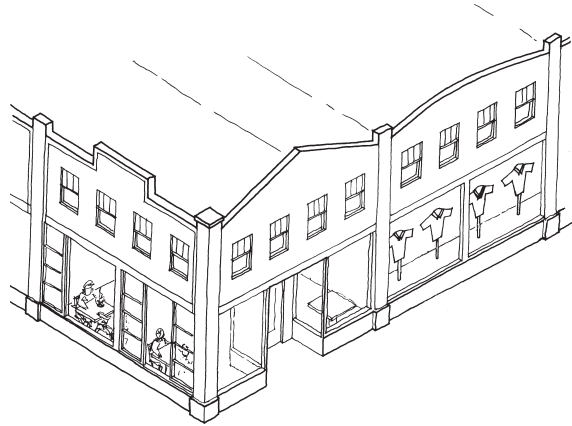
Buildings should have articulated store fronts.



b. **Transparency:**

Buildings should have a high degree of visual transparency, by providing large storefront windows of non-reflective, clear glass.

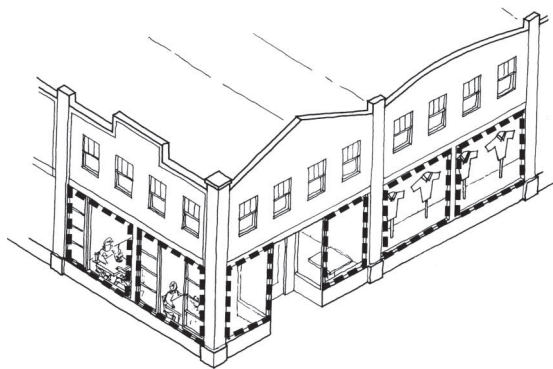
No windows are required for buildings with unique requirements, such as cinemas or theaters, provided exterior walls are designed to provide architectural relief or are screened by landscaping and pedestrian amenities, such as wider sidewalks or benches.



5. *Building Detailing*

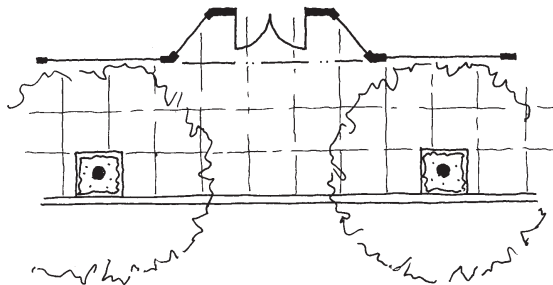
a. **Detailing:**

Buildings should be well-detailed with a consistent architecture and vocabulary. All facades should emphasize three dimensional detailing such as cornices, window moldings, and reveals to cast shadows and create visual interest on the facade. Architectural elements should be used to provide relief c.



b. **Windows:**

Ground floor windows shall be large with a high degree of transparency with non-reflective glass. To the degree feasible, operable windows should be encouraged above the ground floor in new buildings.

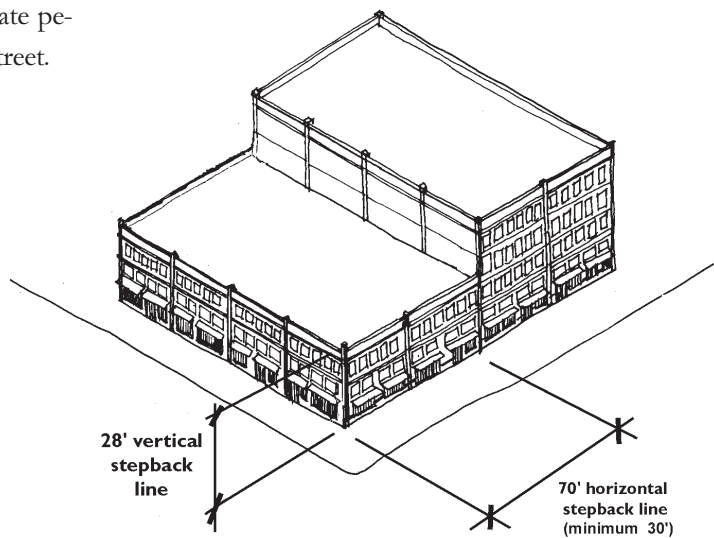


c. **Building Entries:**

Building entries should occur from main streets, and shall be accented with features such as molding, lighting, overhangs, or awnings. Building entries should be recessed into entry bays, to create transitional spaces between the street and buildings.

6. *Building Step Backs*

Buildings shall be stepped back from Capitol Avenue above a vertical datum line of two stories, or 28'. Buildings should be stepped back from the Capitol Avenue build-to line beyond a horizontal datum line a minimum of 30 feet. A 70 foot setback is encouraged in order to retain a more intimate pedestrian scale retail environment along the street.

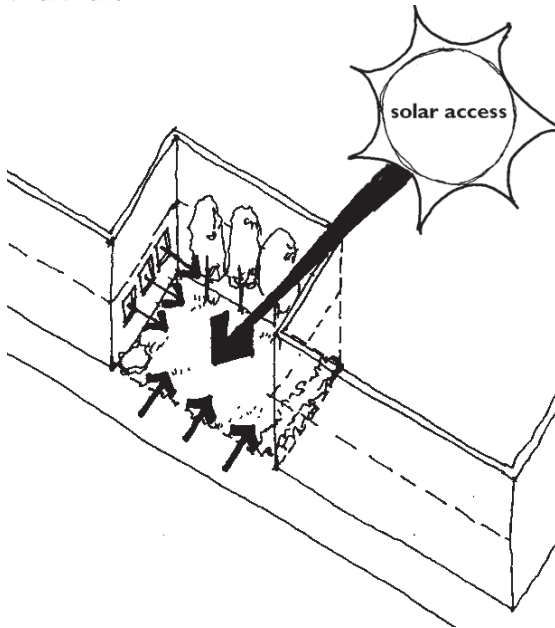


7. *Public Plazas and Open Space Design*

These design criteria apply to projects with plazas and open spaces that are applying for a square footage bonus. The following criteria must be met (as determined by City staff) in order to qualify for the bonus:

a. Open Space Activity:

Open spaces shall be located adjacent to high-activity generating uses such as shops and restaurants. Open spaces may be used to accommodate outdoor retailing activities in order to create a lively, vital environment.



b. Open Space Transparency:

Open spaces shall be visually transparent from at least two sides. The open space shall be visible from the street frontage and building interior.

c. Open Space Orientation:

Open spaces shall have good solar orientation, including southern, western or eastern exposure. A minimum of 50% of the open space shall be in direct sunlight during summer months between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

d. Landscape Materials:

Paving materials shall be of high-quality materials such as stone, concrete or tile. Plant materials should be drought-tolerant species where appropriate and provide variety while being consistent with the architecture.

e. Minimum Size:

Open spaces shall be a minimum of 1,000 square feet.

f. Location:

Open spaces should be located at the street frontage.

g. Access:

Open spaces shall be publicly accessible at all times. Gates and fences shall not be constructed.

8 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter outlines the regulatory changes needed to adopt the Concept Plan and describes public improvements, marketing strategies and funding sources for the Concept Plan. Each section includes items identified for City action, as called for throughout the Plan.

A. Regulatory Changes

Implementation of the concepts in the Concept Plan will require changes to the existing regulatory structure currently in place in Fremont. Overall, the plan concepts are consistent with the General Plan as it exists today, with the exception of permitted residential uses in the CBD.

1. General Plan

The General Plan must be amended to allow mixed-use residential uses in the CBD, as identified by the Concept Plan.

2. Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance must be amended to include building intensity allowances and requirements to be consistent with the concepts contained in the Concept Plan.

The exact intensities for new development in the CBD must be determined through further study. These items will include base, bonus and maximum FAR levels, square footage bonuses for open space provision, minimum landscaping requirements and parking requirements and reductions. In establish-

ing base and maximum FAR's, the City should work to strike a balance between them that will firmly establish incentives for developers to provide the amenities called for in the Concept Plan.

Additionally, an appropriate listing of land uses for the CBD and its subdistricts will be required to implement the Plan. The City should use the intended land use emphasis for each subdistrict in this Concept Plan as a basis for revising the allowed land uses in the Zoning Ordinance for the CBD.

3. *Modifications to Street Standards*

In order to allow for construction of public streets in the CBD according to the standards suggested in Chapter 5, it will be necessary for the City to amend or modify its street standards.

4. *Other Regulatory Items for Further Study*

Several regulatory items other than zoning will require further study in order to implement the Plan. These items are listed below, and are described in more detail in the body of the Plan.

- ◆ **Housing/Mixed Use.** Study is required to determine appropriate minimum parcel sizes, and the appropriate mix between commercial uses and residential uses in a mixed-use project, and any minimum affordability requirements. These items could be addressed during the creation of implementation mechanisms for the Concept Plan, or after the Plan has been in place for several years.

- ◆ **Energy Efficient and Green Construction Building Guidelines.** An incentive for developers to utilize energy efficient and green construction building practices should be provided. The City should develop a set of minimum criteria for a developer in order to establish this development bonus.
- ◆ **New Street and Roadway Provision.** As described in Chapters 5 and 6, additional streets and roadways are proposed in the CBD to break down the existing block sizes. Three possible approaches are identified, including dedication to the City as a condition of approval, FAR incentives, or City acquisition. These alternative approaches should be evaluated by the City for their relative feasibility.

B. Public Projects and Programs

This section describes the key capital improvement projects and programs needed to implement the Concept Plan. Public improvements will be implemented through joint development programs, city funding, and/or with City participation in exchange for amenities.

1. High-Priority Projects and Programs

Four high-priority projects have been identified for the implementation of the Concept Plan. These projects are:

- ◆ **Retail Segment of Capitol Avenue.** The Gateway Segment of Capitol Avenue will occur as part of the development of the City Hall site.

- ◆ **Fremont Boulevard Improvements.**
- ◆ **Land Acquisition for the Cultural Arts Center.**
- ◆ **Land Acquisition for Open Spaces and Plazas.**

2. Other Short-Term Projects and Programs

A number of improvement strategies could be undertaken immediately to begin to implement the Concept Plan in the short term. These strategies are described in the previous chapters and summarized here:

- ◆ **Pedestrian Connection Improvements to BART.** Explore possibilities to improve pedestrian connections from the Fremont BART Station, such as through the Gateway Plaza Shopping Center, and across Walnut Avenue to the new Civic Center development. Potential pedestrian improvements might include improved signal timing at pedestrian crossings. These concepts are referenced in Chapter 5.
- ◆ **CBD Signage and Gateway Program.** Undertake a CBD signage program to provide Fremont residents and visitors a better sense of orientation to the CBD from other Fremont districts, from Mission Boulevard and from I-880. The signage program could include special gateway signs announcing entry points into the CBD. These concepts are referenced in Chapter 4.

- ◆ **Improve Connection Between I-880 and the CBD.** Study means to improve access from the Interstate 880 to the CBD. New signage along the freeway could possibly be installed to guide people to the CBD. These concepts are referenced in Chapter 5.
- ◆ **Existing Private Roadway Maintenance.** Explore possible coordinated programs to facilitate maintenance of existing private roadways. Currently, needed maintenance of some of the private roadways in the CBD requires the involvement of many adjacent property owners and is hence difficult to accomplish.
- ◆ **Shuttle Operation.** Shuttle service should be provided from BART to the Hub, and could be considered in the short-term. Options for funding a CBD shuttle from the BART station to key destinations in the CBD may include a special assessment district, joint ventures with BART and AC Transit, or employer participation.
- ◆ **Temporary Shared Parking Facilities.** The City should explore the creation of temporary, shared parking facilities on a portion or all of the City Hall site.
- ◆ **City Hall and Plaza.** The development of a new City Hall is a key catalyst for the CBD, and should occur as soon as possible. The creation of a City Hall Plaza will occur at the time that the City Hall is developed.
- ◆ **Cultural Arts Center.** As noted above, the City should purchase a site for the Cultural Arts Center in the near-term as a high-priority project. The site should be used as a public open space or plaza until the public supports the construction of the center through such means as a bond issue.
- ◆ **Williams Park Expansion.** This project should be developed as a part of any future expansion of the Hub shopping center, and may be funded privately or as part of a joint development effort with the City. The park should be expanded at the same time or after the Carriage House is restored and put to public use, as described in Chapter 4.
- ◆ **Streetscape Master Plan.** Chapter 5 calls for the enhancement and redesign of most of the streets in the CBD, and proposes overall streetscape design approaches for them. A Streetscape Master Plan should be developed for the CBD, based on these design approaches, which would include the development of a streetscape palette of street furniture, lighting and trees and cost estimates for specific projects. The Plan should also specify minimum lighting standards for safe night time pedestrian circulation in public and private areas in the CBD.

3. *Other Long-Term Projects and Programs*

The Plan calls for the provision of a number of other programs and capital projects, which are summarized below:

- ◆ **Signage Program.** As called for in Chapter 4, the City should pursue the development of a gateway and city-wide signage program at key entry points to the CBD and from other parts of the city, such as Irvington, Niles, Warm Springs, Mission San Jose, Centerville and the freeways.
- ◆ **Open Space Improvements.** A program to encourage open space improvements should be developed for the CBD, to allow for installation of special features such as fountains, sculptures and public art. The program should encourage participation of both local and national designers, as well as artists who reflect the diversity of the local community.
- ◆ **CBD Accessibility.** The City should study means to improve access to the CBD from the freeways, such as traffic engineering improvements to Stevenson Boulevard as called for in Chapter 6, and should work with AC Transit to provide improved transit to the CBD to and from the nearby historic commercial districts of Niles, Centerville and Irvington.
- ◆ **Capital Improvements Program.** A Capital Improvements Program should be developed for all of the improvements proposed for the CBD, to be used to apply for funding. These improvements will include the projects identified in the Concept Plan, and others identified through the preparation of the Streetscape Master Plan, Signage Program and Open Space Improvements Program. The Capital Improve-

ments Program for the CBD could then be incorporated into the city-wide Capital Improvements Plan process.

C. Marketing Strategies

This section suggests strategies to promote and market the area to businesses, retailers, developers and the community to ensure rapid implementation of the Plan.

1. Marketing, Promotion and Image-Building

The City of Fremont is planning to undertake a citywide marketing program to build its image as a place to live, work and play. As Fremont continues to build out both its residential and business park areas, it has also grown to become a part of Silicon Valley, with one of the most vibrant high-tech economies in the world.

The Fremont CBD envisioned in the Concept Plan offers excellent development and reuse opportunities to create a 21st century downtown core area. With the construction of the new City Hall, the potential for a Cultural Arts Center, and the emphasis on creating a main street on Capitol Avenue, the image of downtown Fremont as the cross-roads of a dynamic community will be reinforced.

To promote this new, exciting renovation of downtown Fremont, the City, working in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce, other marketing groups, a possible Downtown Business Association, merchants, property owners, developers and residents,

should dedicate a portion of its citywide promotional campaign to marketing the CBD. This effort could range from promotional materials showing key development locations in the CBD (such as the office center area at BART, the City Hall site and the proposed Capitol Avenue improvements), a shopping and entertainment guide to market merchants and restaurants, and/or web-based materials. Key development opportunity sites could also be identified through a separate set of materials with related demographic and business-oriented data.

Special events also serve to promote downtown areas. These could be coordinated through the City Economic Development Department, along with merchants and other businesses, a Downtown Business Association, and possibly a Business Improvement District. Special events could range from “Downtown Day” (with store sales tied to outdoor vendors and booths), parades and holiday events.

2. Database of Available Commercial Space and Development Opportunities

To further promote the availability of development and leasing opportunities, particularly to high-tech companies that often require rapid space transactions, the City could create a CBD Database, showing parcels, buildings, ownership, broker representation and other pertinent data. This database, if structured properly, could also be made available online to promote development opportunities in the CBD.

3. Publicizing Concept Plan Development Incentives

The City should publicize the development incentives included in this Plan that are intended to encourage private investment in the CBD. These incentives include FAR exemptions, transfers and bonuses, parking exemptions, and permit streamlining for projects with special features such as ground-floor retail and pedestrian amenities.

These new development incentives will stimulate private investment interest in Focus Area and Capitol Avenue development, and should be publicized to the development community. One approach would be to hold a “CBD Development Summit” to explain the new incentives, which could include a walking tour with special invitees. In addition, a clearly-worded brochure, with illustrative examples of the development potential under the incentives program, could be prepared and distributed to developers.

4. Community and Marketing Group Coordination

The City should work with community and marketing groups such as the Chamber of Commerce to promote and market the CBD.

5. Downtown Business Association Establishment

The City should encourage and support the formation of a Downtown Business Association.

6. *Visitors Bureau Establishment*

The City should seek to provide a visitor's bureau or community information center, perhaps utilizing the historic Carriage House at Williams Park, as described in Chapter 4.

D. Funding Sources

This section describes funding sources that may be used to implement the capital improvements proposed in the Concept Plan.

Many cities and state governments are currently revisiting their capital investment strategies to redirect public investments towards downtown and core areas. In Fremont, this strategy could take the form of a public improvements financing plan, with five-year incremental strategies for streetscape/landscaping, public art, and other projects. The financing plan could focus first on the City Hall and Cultural Arts Center and surrounding area, as an anchor to Capitol Avenue, and would detail federal, state, and local funding sources and uses of those funds for capital investment projects.

Possible funding sources for use in the CBD include:

1. *City General Funds*

Some small portion of funding for improvements under the Concept Plan may be available from the City's General Funds. These funds consist primarily of property taxes and other revenues, and are generally used to provide basic city services. A very limited amount of funding is set aside for capital improvement projects out of the City's General

Funds. Therefore, very little funding can be expected from this source for use in the CBD.

2. *Bonds*

The City could issue a variety of debt mechanisms such as bonds to generate revenue to implement the proposed public improvements and facilities in this Concept Plan. Depending on the mechanism, the repayment of such debt could come from the City's General Fund, from property owners in the CBD, or from new city taxes. Before assessments or taxes could be enacted, a vote of affected property owners or residents would be required.

3. *Redevelopment*

Designation of an area for redevelopment under California law must meet specific criteria regarding a determination of economic and physical blight. It is unclear whether any portion of the CBD or specific sites would meet such criteria. Further review of redevelopment as a possible financial mechanism is underway at the staff level.

4. *Joint Development*

Joint development approaches between public agencies and/or with private companies or individuals may be a means to fund development of public facilities under the Concept Plan.

In a public/private partnership, a private individual or company would join forces with the City to develop a new project. This type of development might be pursued for a project such as a new Cultural Arts Center. Another example might be new development around the BART Station, which might occur

with a joint development agreement between BART, the City of Fremont and Washington Hospital.

5. *Assessment District*

The formation of an assessment district, such as a Business Improvement District (BID), will be considered for the entire CBD or for certain portions like the Focus Area. Participation in the assessment district could be optional for the entire CBD, but could be required of all parcels in the Focus Area. An assessment district or BID could play a key role in the economic enhancement of the CBD, and could coordinate store hours, storefront displays, signage and merchandising, promotions and advertisement, entertainment and special events, and shared parking programs.

6. *Open Space Improvement Funding*

Ways to fund open space improvements such as fountains, sculptures and public art must be studied further. Provisions for funding may include a required percentage of construction costs, private funding or allocation of other public funds.

7. *Shuttle Funding*

The new shuttle system could be funded through a special assessment district, other public funding, a joint venture with AC Transit, or employer participation.

8. *Federal, State and Regional Funds*

This section addresses federal, state and regional funds available for projects such as those described in the Concept Plan. The likelihood of receiving funding grants is greatly increased for projects that

are part of an official, adopted plan, created through a public process, such as this Concept Plan.

TEA-21, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, provides a number of funding sources for smaller, neighborhood-based projects relating to streetscape improvements and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These programs include the following:

- ◆ **Surface Transportation Program (STP).** STP is the largest and most flexible program for capital projects.
- ◆ **Congestion Management Air Quality (CMAQ) Funds.** The primary focus of CMAQ is to fund projects and programs which reduce transportation-related emissions.
- ◆ **Transportation Enhancements (TE).** TE funds a broad range of transportation improvements from bicycle and pedestrian facilities to main street revitalization to historic preservation of train depots.
- ◆ **State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)/Regional Improvement Program (RIP).** Funding for the STIP and RIP programs comes from a blend of TEA-21 and state monies.
- ◆ **Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC).** MTC recently developed this program to fund community-oriented transportation projects, including streetscape improvements,

transit-, pedestrian-, and bicycle-oriented developments.

- ◆ **Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 3.** TDA funds are generated by a quarter cent of the statewide sales tax that are returned to counties for the purpose of funding bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit and special transit for disabled persons.
- ◆ **Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA).** Cities and counties with Caltrans-approved bicycle plans are eligible for this funding, which is available on an annual basis.

8: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

APPENDIX A: BACKGROUND REPORTS

This appendix provides a list of the background reports prepared as a part of the Concept Plan process. These reports are available from the City of Fremont.

- ◆ **Urban Design and Development Existing Conditions Report.** This report documents the existing conditions under which development occurs in the CBD. *DC&E, April 1999.*
- ◆ **Market Overview.** The market study provides an overview of the demographic trends and the market conditions and outlook for six land uses in the CBD, as of April 1999. *Bay Area Economics, April 1999.*
- ◆ **Transportation Existing Conditions.** The transportation existing conditions report documents the vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle circulations conditions present in the CBD. *Fehr and Peers Associates, April 1999.*
- ◆ **Alternatives Workbook.** The Alternatives Workbook presents and evaluates alternatives for various design and development possibilities for the CBD. The workbook addresses six development issues which were addressed by the DPAC at a series of workshops. *DC&E, September 1999.*
- ◆ **Comparison of Traffic Impacts for Fremont Downtown Concept Plans.** This memorandum summarizes the results of an analysis of the traffic impacts of two Concept Plan scenarios at eight major gateway intersections in the CBD. *Fehr and Peers, April 2000.*
- ◆ **Financial Analysis of Fremont Prototype Projects.** This memorandum summarizes the results of a financial analysis conducted for 20 prototypical projects for a typical site in the CBD Focus Area, with various assumptions about land uses, parking types, site conditions and parking ratios in order to explore the feasibility of both mixed-use and higher intensity projects in the CBD. *Bay Area Economics, March 2000.*
- ◆ **Demonstration Site Designs.** Three demonstration site designs for prototype Focus Area sites are included with the Financial Analysis Memorandum described above. *Van Meter, Williams & Pollack, March 2000.*
- ◆ **Downtown Plan Advisory Committee, “Final Draft CBD Concept Plan”, December, 2000.** This was the final consensus plan recommended by the DPAC to the City Council. Especially important in this document is the discussion on whether housing should be included in the Focus Area (see pages 30-31 and Appendix B). Although it is not appropriate to incorporate a pro/con discussion in a Final Plan, the discussion in this Draft Plan explains some of the ongoing concerns likely to be expressed during the implementation of the CBD Concept Plan.

APPENDIX A: BACKGROUND REPORTS
